British Policy Towards Russian Refugees in the Aftermath of the Bolshevik Revolution

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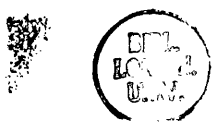

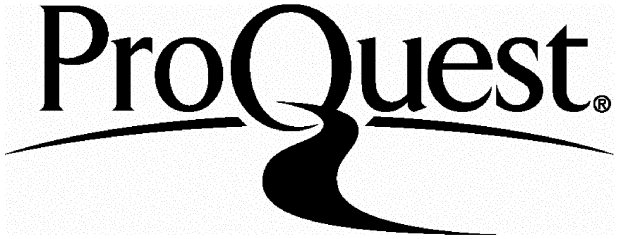

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines British government policy towards Russian refugees in the aftermath of the Bolshevik Revolution and the Civil War in Russia. As a consequence of these two events, approximately one million Russians opposing the Bolshevik rule escaped from Russia.

The Russian refugee problem was one of the major political and humanitarian problems of inter-war Europe, affecting both individual countries of refuge, as well as the international community as a whole. The League of Nations had been formed in 1919 in order to promote international peace and security. The huge numbers of refugees from the former Russian Empire, on the other hand, were seen as a threat to the international stability. Consequently, the member states of the League for the first time recognised the need for international co-operative efforts to assist refugees, and the post of High Commissioner for Russian Refugees was established under the auspices of the League. Significantly, this action marked the beginning of the international refugee regime; the active co-operation of states in the field of refugee assistance.

European countries, in addition to international co-operative efforts on behalf of Russian refugees, also took individual actions for their assistance by offering them asylum in their countries. However, there were big differences in the policies of various European countries. Britain had long enjoyed a reputation of being a country of liberal refuge, where political refugees and immigrants could find asylum. This liberalism, however, started to be undermined at the beginning of the 20th century, particularly since the First World War. Although a principle that political refugees should be considered separately remained, my thesis will argue that this rule was not followed in the case of Russian refugees. From the very beginning the British government took a rigid attitude against the admission of Russian refugees to Britain, and strict provisions were set for the entry of individual refugees. Because of this, the number of Russian refugees in Britain was much smaller than in many other European countries, for example France or Germany. The policy of the British government towards Russian refugees thus offers a good example of the general decline of liberalism in Britain.

CONTENTS

A NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION

In my thesis I have followed systematically the Library of Congress system of transliteration from Russian to English. In the footnotes and bibliography, however, the Russian names and words are given in the form they are presented in the sources and documents.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BCRRC	British Committee of the Russian Red Cross
BRRC	British Russian Relief Committee
CO	Colonial Office
CRC	Central Russian Committee
FO	Foreign Office
HO	Home Office
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
ILO	International Labour Organisation
RRA	Russian Refugees Relief Association
RRCS	Russian Red Cross Society (old organisation)
RRF	Russian Relief Fund
RRRF	Russian Relief and Reconstruction Fund
URR	Union for the Regeneration of Russia
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association
WO	War Office
ZEMGOR	Union of Zemstvos and Towns

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Russian emigration in the aftermath of the First World War, the Bolshevik Revolution and the Civil War in Russia, constituted one of the major political and humanitarian problems of inter-war Europe, both for individual countries and for the international community as a whole. Between 1917 and 1923 over a million Russian refugees escaped from Bolshevik Russia and were scattered to a number of different European countries, as well as to the United States, the Far East and elsewhere.

The post-revolutionary Russian emigration, unlike the earlier migrations from the Russian Empire, was concentrated in a period of a few years. The Soviet government started to restrict emigration from 1922 onwards, and by mid-1923 the emigration to European countries had become virtually impossible by legal means. [1] Migration to the Far East continued until the mid-1930s and some individual Soviet defectors continued to escape to the west, but the mass movement from Russia ended during the early 1920s.[2]

The estimates of the total number of Russian refugees have varied a lot. Early estimates mostly varied from one and a half to three million. The League of Nations estimated in 1922 that there were 1,5 million Russian refugees in Europe. According to the Central Information Office of Countess Bobrinskii, established in Constantinople in May 1920, there were slightly over one million Russian refugees in Europe in January 1921. The American Red Cross estimate in January 1922, on the other hand, was about two million. Even higher was the estimate of a German author, H. von Rimscha; his estimate for the total number of Russian refugees, including the Far East, was almost three million.

A more critical examination of the records at the time of a survey by Sir John Simpson, *The Refugee Problem: Report of A Survey*, which was taken at the behest of the Royal

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1 Dowty, Alan. Closed Borders. The Contemporary Assault of the Freedom of Movement. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1987, p. 69; Marrus, Michael. The Unwanted. European Refugees in the Twentieth Century. New York 1985, pp. 59-60.

2 Skran, Claudena. Refugees in Inter-War Europe. The Emergence of a Regime. Oxford 1995, p. 36. On Soviet defectors see Gordon Brook-Shepherd. The Storm Petrels: The Flight of First Soviet Defectors. New York 1977.

Institute of International Affairs and published in 1939, resulted in a reduction of these estimates. In the survey it was pointed out that the earlier estimates, given at the time of the exodus, were often too high, as they were made at a time of chaotic conditions and constant flux of refugees from one country to another. Estimates of various countries were not simultaneous, which made the duplication of figures very probable. Neither was there any proper machinery for accurate statistical records in the countries of emigration.[3]

According to Dr. Izjumov, whose figures were published in Simpson's survey, there were between 635,600 and 755,000 Russian refugees in Europe in January 1922. [4] The figure does not, however, include those in the Far East. [5] The material consulted by Izjumov consisted largely of various documents relating to Russian emigration, deposited in the Russian archive in Prague [6]. Other documentation used by Simpson for compiling the survey were, for example, the documents of the Red Cross, statistics of the countries of asylum and various refugee organisations, as well as the League of Nations. According to Marc Raeff, one of the leading historians on Russian emigration, Simpson's survey can be considered one of the most comprehensive and on the whole, reliable study on Russian emigration. He points out that Simpson and his collaborators, for example Dr. Izjumov, used all available documentation and nothing new has surfaced since. [7]

Nevertheless, estimates in recent studies still vary a great deal. Heller and Nekrich (1986) cite figures ranging from 860,000 to two million and end up with an estimate that more than one million people left Russia. However, they also conclude that the exact figure can not be stated. [8] Michael Marrus (1985) estimates that the number of refugees numbered close to a million at the highest point, but that the total fell quite

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3 Simpson, Sir John Hope. The Refugee Problem: Report of A Survey. London 1939 (Issued under the auspices of the Royal Institute of International Affairs), pp. 80-81.
4 Simpson 1939, pp. 80-81.
5 Marrus 1985, p. 61.
6 The Historical Archive of the Russian Emigration was organised in Prague at the beginning of 1920s. The archives contained various material and statistics on Russian emigration. (Reference: Simpson 1939, p. 388)
7 Simpson 1939, pp. 68, 81-82; Raeff Marc. Russia Abroad. A Cultural History of the Russian Emigration, 1919-1939. Oxford 1990, pp. 23-24.
8 Heller, Michael and Nekrich, Aleksandr. Utopia u vlasti. Istoriia Sovetskogo Soiuza s 1917 goda do nashikh dnei. London 1986, p. 151.

substantially in the late 1920s as the situation stabilised. His conclusion seems to be largely based on the results of Simpson's Survey. He also refers to the detailed enquiry carried out by the International Labour Office in 1926. The ILO recorded 755,305 refugees, although this figure excluded Germany. [9]

Evan Mawdsley (1987) cites the estimate of demographer Frank Lorimer, about two million refugees, as well as the highest estimate by unofficial Soviet source, M. Maksudov, that of 3,5 million refugees. [10] However, neither Lorimer nor Maksudov give information about the sources at which they base their figures. Compared with other estimates, at least Maksudov's figure clearly strikes as being far too high.

Thus, it has to be concluded that due to the lack of reliable and comprehensive statistics, the precise number of Russian refugees can not be stated. Nevertheless, it seems that Simpson's survey, especially in view of the number of materials consulted, remains the most extensive study in the field, estimating the number of Russian refugees in Europe as close to a million in the early 1920s. It should, however, be noted that emigration also included other than pure Russian nationals, such as Jews, Balts, Poles and Ukrainians. In the statistics of the 1920s they were often simply included in the Russian figures, since this was a common practice as regards the citizens of the former Russian Empire.

Some individual European countries became greatly involved in helping Russian refugees and offered asylum for large numbers of them. However, there were also great differences in the level of involvement and the practices of different countries. As it will be pointed out in my thesis, despite the liberal reputation of Britain as a 'country of asylum' the British government took a very non-liberal attitude towards Russian refugees, especially in relation to their admission to Britain. This is apparent also in the number of Russian émigrés in Britain. Compared with many other European countries, the number of Russian refugees admitted to Britain was very small, probably no more than 10,000 at its highest.

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9 Marrus 1985, p. 61.

10 Mawdsley, Evan. The Russian Civil War. London and Boston 1987, p. 286; Lorimer, Frank. The Population of the Soviet Union: History and Prospects. Geneva 1946, pp. 39-40; Maksudov, M. Losses Suffered by the Populations of the USSR 1918-1958. In Medvedev, Roy (ed.). The Samizdat Register II. London 1981, p. 232.

On the other hand, the policies of the British government were challenged by the different policies of, for example, France, Germany and Czechoslovakia. France, as Britain, held a reputation as a country of liberal refuge. That this was so also in practice can be seen by the fact that in the 1930s none of the other European countries approached France in the total number of refugees that were given permanent residence. Russian refugees were one group included in this category. [11] As with many other countries there are, however, problems in stating the actual numbers. Throughout the 1920s the French government repeatedly stated that there were 400,000 Russian refugees in France, even though this figure bore no relation whatsoever to the census returns. This figure was then cited in the League of Nations documents throughout the 1920s, even though it was acknowledged that there were no real statistics available on the number of refugees in France. [12]

The estimate of Dr. Izjumov, presented in Simpson's survey, was however very different. According to him there were about 60-68,000 Russian refugees in France in January 1922.[13] After this date the number of Russian émigrés in France nevertheless further increased, especially as many Russians left Germany for France between 1923 and 1924 to take advantage of better employment possibilities. Pierre Kovalevskii, the principal émigré historian of the Russian emigration, has considered the range 100,000-150,000 to be the most realistic estimate for a total of Russian emigration in France during the inter-war years. [14] Robert H. Johnston, in his book *New Mecca, New Babylon*, a monograph on Russian emigration in Paris, states that it is reasonable to suggest that the maximum number of Russians in France did not much exceed 120,000. His estimate is based on French census records and police estimates, with comparisons to figures presented by Kovalevskii and Simpson. [15] As emigration to France increased in the 1920s for material, cultural and political reasons, the estimate of 120-150,000 seems quite reliable.

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11 Simpson 1939, pp. 297-98.
12 Skran 1995, pp. 35-36, Simpson 1939, pp. 82-83; FO 371/10467, File 17, Paper N 5200. Report by Nansen 7.6.1924. PRO.
13 Dr. Izjumov. Great Exodus. 29 April 1938, pp. 33-34. Refugee Survey 1937-38. Special reports, Vol. II. Russian refugees (2). The Royal Institute of International Affairs.
14 Kovalevskii, Pierre. Zarubezhnaia Rossiia. Istoria i kul'turno-prosvetitel'naia rabota russkogo zarubezh'ia za polveka 1920-1970gg. Paris 1971, p. 31;
15 Johnston, Robert H. New Mecca, New Babylon. Paris and the Russian Exiles, 1920-1943. Kingston and Montreal 1988, p. 25.

By the middle of 1920s Paris had become 'the intellectual and spiritual mecca' of Russian emigration and its position as cultural and political capital of Russian diaspora remained unchallenged throughout the 1920s and 1930s.[16] The special lure of Paris was partly explained by the fact that the pre-Revolutionary political and cultural elite who had close relations to French culture and language was heavily represented amongst émigrés. None of the other cities, even if hospitable to Russian emigration, could compete with the international attraction of Paris for various material, cultural, political and ideological reasons.[17]

Importantly, however, the large-scale emigration of Russians was only possible with the consent of the French authorities. As a consequence of labour shortages that had intensified during the First World War, the French government was willing to accept Russian refugees who wanted to work, and the French Ministries of Labour and Agriculture facilitated the entry of able-bodied refugees into France. [18] Perhaps some 50,000 Russian refugees entered France during the twenties on labour contracts with large industrial and agricultural ministries.[19] Although the attitude towards employment changed quite radically during the 1930s Depression, the French practice can be considered as quite unique, since no other European country deliberately encouraged immigration of refugees for employment purposes.[20] As it will be shown in my thesis, the attitude of the British government towards the employment of refugees was completely the reverse.

In addition to liberal employment policies in the early 1920s, the French authorities granted long-term residence permits. The French government also provided educational help to émigré children and Russian children were admitted to French public schools on equal terms to French children. Throughout the 1920s the French authorities continued to consider Vasilii Maklakov, the former Russian Ambassador of the Provisional Government in Paris, as the ambassador of 'Russia Abroad', the Russian émigré society

16 Huntington, Chapin W. The Homesick Million. Russia-out-of-Russia. Boston, Massachusetts 1933, p. 22; Johnston 1988, p. 15; Raeff 1990, p. 37.
17 Johnston 1988, pp. 21-22.
18 Hassell, James E. Russian Refugees in France and the United States Between the World Wars. Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, Vol. 81, Part 7. 1991, pp. 22-23.
19 Hassell 1991, p. 25.
20 Adams, Walter. Refugees in Europe. The Annals of the American Academy. May 1939, pp. 41-44.

in France. [21] In addition, the French government granted official and legal status to so called '*Offices russes*'. The main office was located in Paris and directed by Maklakov. Together with regional offices it was empowered to issue various civil certificates for émigrés and to attest signatures and translations. [22]

In *New Mecca, New Babylon*, Johnston notices that the Russian émigrés in France shared a common belief on the importance of the preservation of Russian culture and values. Therefore, strong efforts were made to teach the émigré youth about Russia, through the establishment of various committees and organisations, as well as various schools and educational establishments for émigré children. Thus, fear of assimilation or denationalisation, as it was called, led to the maintenance of a close émigré community and efforts to prevent the absorption of émigré children into French culture. Although many of the younger generation of Russians did not always share the fear of the their parents, Russian émigrés in France were nevertheless slow to assimilate. [23] According to one Russian émigré in France, Nina Gourfinkel, even after thirty years residence many Russians in France remained 'on the margin of French life, unassimilated and unassimilable'. [24] My thesis will suggest that in Britain this was not the case, but assimilation seems to have been a much quicker and easier process.

Germany also admitted a large number of Russian refugees to its territory. Robert C. Williams in his study on Russian émigrés in Germany from 1881 to 1941, *Culture in Exile*, points out that Germany's role as the first centre of Russian emigration was not due solely to the easy geographic access, but also to the fact that visas were easy to obtain from the German government. [25] This is particularly interesting in view of the fact that the economic situation in post-war Germany in no ways encouraged foreign immigration. [26] Of course, the liberal attitude of the German government can also be compared with the different attitude of the British in adverse economic conditions.

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21 Hassell 1991, pp. 22-23; Raeff 1990, pp. 35-37.
22 Johnston 1988, p. 68; Hassell 1991, p. 24.
23 Johnston 1988, pp. 21, 85-90, 148.
24 Quoted in Johnston 1988, p. 208, note 34.
25 Williams, Robert. Culture in Exile. Russian Émigrés in Germany, 1881-1941. Ithaca and London 1972, p. 112.
26 Hammar, Tomas (ed.). European Immigration Policy. A Comparative Study. Cambridge 1985, pp. 167-68.

Until 1923 Germany hosted more Russian refugees than any other country in Europe and Berlin had become the intellectual and literary centre of the Russian emigration.[27] At its highest point the post-war Germany hosted over 200,000 Russian refugees. [28]As with France, the earliest estimates were clearly too high, varying from 300 to 600 thousand.[29] Dr. Izjumov's estimate reduced the figure of Russian refugees in Germany on 1 January 1922 to 230-250,000.[30]

The main attraction for the refugees was the low value of the German mark that guaranteed the lower cost of living compared with other European countries, even if finding a job could be more difficult than, for example, in France. Another attraction, especially for émigré writers and politicians, was the large number of German and Russian publishing houses in Berlin.[31] According to Williams, the social composition of the Russian émigré community in Germany largely consisted of the upper classes and the intelligentsia. Many monarchists, however, found Germany inhospitable to their political activity and moved on to Paris or the Balkans. The Russian emigration in Germany included a number of non-Russian nationals, such as Ukrainians, Poles and Armenians and, most importantly, the Baltic Germans and Jews. [32]

In 1923 the German economic situation changed quite dramatically with the inflation and temporary stabilisation of the German mark, which put an end to cheap living. When at the same time France was encouraging immigration, many Russian refugees left Germany for France, and Paris replaced Berlin as the capital of Russian emigration.[33] The move was also hastened by the worsening political situation and, especially after the 1931 Depression, by the restrictive regulations placed on employment of foreigners.[34] From 1923 onwards there was a steady decline in the number of Russians in Germany, until by 1930 there were less than 100,000 left. [35]

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27 Williams 1972, p. 111.
28 Williams 1972, pp. 111-12: Skran 1995, pp. 35-36.
29 League of Nations. Official Journal, March 1923, p. 392; Simpson 1939, p. 82.
30 Simpson 1939, p. 82.
31 Williams 1972, p. 112.
32 Ibid., pp. 112-13, 147.
33 Huntington 1933, p. 22; Williams 1972, p. 112.
34 Raeff 1990, p. 37.
35 Williams 1972, p. 112; Simpson 1939, p. 109.

Another reason which encouraged the emigration of Russians from Germany was the warming of relations between the German and Soviet governments. The conclusion of the Treaty of Rapallo in 1922, in which Germany recognised the Soviet government had the most significant influence on the legal status of Russian émigrés in Germany. After the conclusion of the Treaty, those émigrés who did not agree to recognise the Soviet government became legally stateless. Until 1924 it was still possible to obtain identity cards and passports from *the Russian Delegation*, which was unofficially recognised as the representative organ of Russian émigrés by the German authorities. However, the German government was under constant pressure from the Soviet government not to issue them. As a result the powers of the Russian Delegation were gradually reduced and the attitude of the German Foreign Office towards it became much cooler. [36] Those Russian émigrés that continued to live in Germany to a great extent responded by isolating themselves from German society. [37]

The policies of the Czechoslovak government also offer an interesting example of benevolent attitude towards Russian refugees. Although the number of Russian refugees in Czechoslovakia was never very large, the government initiated a set of special policies for their assistance. This was something very special, as Czechoslovakia was the only European state with a comprehensive programme of assistance for Russian refugees [38].

The governmental program of assistance, known as *the Russian Action*, was born out of humanitarian and political aspirations of the leadership of Czechoslovakia. [39] As the Bolshevik regime was expected to be temporary, the maintenance of the Russian culture through training and education was considered an important task for the future of Russia. The objectives of the programme also largely determined the social composition of the refugees in Czechoslovakia. The main bulk of the Russian refugees consisted of

36 Williams 1972, pp. 116-17, 144-146.
37 Williams 1972, p. 322.
38 Chinyaeva, Elena. 'Russian Emigres: Czechoslovak Refugee Policy and the Development of the International Refugee Regime between the Two World Wars'. Journal of Refugee Studies, Vol. 8, No. 2, 1995, p. 143
39 Chinyaeva, Elena. The Russian Emigration into Czechoslovakia in the Interwar Period. D. Phil. thesis, University of Oxford 1994, p. 16.

the intelligentsia, which in 1926 constituted up to 60 per cent of the émigré community in Czechoslovakia, while agricultural workers made up the remaining. [40]

As a result, various educational establishments for Russian émigrés were set up, mainly in Prague, including the Russian University, the Law Faculty and the Pedagogical Institute, as well as several high schools, technical schools, primary and secondary schools. Also the so-called People's University was established in Prague, with evening courses for people who could not attend a regular university [41]. By 1924 the number of Russian students under the supervision of the Russian Committee, which was established in 1922, was already over 3,000 and they were educated in different areas of engineering, science and agriculture. [42] As a result of *the Russian Action*, Prague developed as an important academic and scholarly centre of Russian emigration. [43]

However, Elena Chinyaeva in her thesis on Russian émigrés in Czechoslovakia, also points out that despite the official policy of the Czechoslovak government for the assistance of refugees, the status of Russian émigrés in Czechoslovakia during the inter-war years remained largely that of 'stateless foreigners'. Moreover, relations between Czechoslovak society and Russian émigrés could best be described as 'uneasy'. Although the Czechoslovak Foreign Ministry was committed to continuing *the Russian Action*, the left-wing parties, influential among the working class and intelligentsia, were hostile to the anti-Soviet Russian exiles. This hostility contributed to the isolation of Russian émigrés from the host society. [44] Interestingly, in Britain the situation seems to have been 'the other way round'; the government maintained very strict rules against the entry of refugees, but those who were admitted were generally treated equally and without discrimination.

To conclude, Paris was the unchallenged political and cultural capital of Russian diaspora. Academically, however, Prague was probably the more important centre.

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40 Chinyaeva. 'Russian Emigres: Czechoslovak Refugee Policy ...'. Journal of Refugee Studies, Vol. 8, No. 2, 1995, p. 143; Simpson 1939, pp. 384-85.
41 Raeff 1990, p. 63.
42 Simpson, Sir John Hope. 'The Refugee problem'. International Affairs, Vol. XVII, No. 5, September-October 1938, p. 611; Simpson 1939, pp. 386-88.
43 Raeff 1990, p. 64; Chinyaeva 1994, p. 17.
44 Chinyaeva 1994, pp. 182-83, 293-94. (Full reference of the thesis in footnote 39)

Germany, on the other hand, attracted émigrés by its large variety of book publishing activities and, until 1923, by the lower cost of living. Importantly, it was the liberal admission policies of these countries that facilitated the entry of Russian émigrés. My thesis will show that opposite was the case in Britain, as from the beginning the government adopted a very strict attitude against the entry of Russian refugees, justified mainly by the economic reasons. Because of this Britain did not have the possibility of becoming similar cultural, political or academic centre of Russian emigration as, for example, France did.

Russian émigré society in Britain was also more 'homogeneous' than in many other countries of emigration. The strict policies of the British government regarding admission meant that the Russian refugees in Britain represented more well-to-do, upper-class and educated elements. As it will be pointed out in my thesis, this fact undoubtedly also had an influence on the relations between émigrés and British society and made assimilation easier. The social composition of the émigré communities also varied in other countries. France, for example, attracted a large number of intelligentsia, but also a number of soldiers and civilians who arrived in the aftermath of the collapse of General Vrangel's army. Czechoslovakia, as already pointed out, invited students and intellectuals, but also a number of Cossack farmers. In Germany there were a large number of Baltic Germans and Jews, as well as other non-Russian nationals.[45] At least in France and Germany the size and heterogeneity of the émigré communities seem to have led to their greater isolation from the host society than, for example, in Britain.

The historiography of Russian emigration or émigrés is not very extensive. Despite a large number of memoirs of individual émigrés, as well as studies on various émigré writers and artists and on émigré literature, there are only few general studies on Russian emigration, or on individual countries of emigration. An authoritative book by Marc Raeff, *Russia Abroad* (1990)[46], concentrates mainly on cultural life of Russian émigrés in the societies of exile, its institutional framework, basic traits and also,

45 Simpson 1939, p. 86; Williams 1972, pp. 113, 147.
46 For full reference of the book see footnote 7.

importantly, its contribution to the culture of the host countries, particularly in the flourishing émigré communities of Paris, Berlin and Prague.

Michael Glenny and Norman Stone, on the other hand, have compiled an excellent oral history of Russian emigration, where three generations tell their different stories about their emigration, over the period of the early 1900s to the late1980s. The book contains various émigré accounts of their escape and lives in various countries around the world, including some accounts of émigré life in Britain in the 1920s and 1930s. [47] The material consists of interviews of émigrés, carried out by Michael Glenny and his assistants mainly during the 1980s, as well as of various memoirs etc. The fact that the interviews were carried out only in the 1980s naturally put some limitations to the 'accuracy of the information'. Nevertheless, Glenny and Stone have carried out a number of interviews of the actual first generation émigrés, as well as traced some interesting early memoirs, that provide valuable information on various aspects of Russian emigration.

Generally speaking, Britain has been largely neglected as a research topic of Russian emigration. Its role has only been treated in few sentences for example in Sir John Simpson's *Refugee Problem*, from which much information has been 'borrowed' for more recent studies on Russian refugees. The main piece of information relating to Britain in Simpson's study is that 'very few Russian refugees entered to Britain and that at one time there were probably about 15,000 refugees in all, but the greater part of them were assisted to emigrate to France, the Balkans and elsewhere'. [48] My thesis will suggest that even this estimate might have been too high.

The lack of studies on Britain and Russian émigrés is largely explained by the fact that as there were only a few Russian refugees in Britain, it simply has not been considered an important topic for research. Recently some interest has been aroused and as a result two separate studies have been published by Russian scholars. The book by Olga Kaznina, *Russkie v Anglii*, is a very detailed study on Russian emigration to Britain in

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47 Glenny, Michael and Stone, Norman. The Other Russia. London 1990.
48 Simpson 1939, p. 339.

the context of Russian-English literary connections of the first half of the 20th century. [49] Even though Kaznina's book mainly concentrates on the literary and academic circles of Russian émigrés in Britain, primarily by considering the role of various individuals, it also contains information on the émigré community in Britain more generally.

Elena Kudriakova has also published a small survey on Russian émigrés in Britain under the title *Rossiiskaia Emigratsiia v Velikobritannii v Period Mezhdy Dvumia Voinami.*[50] In her study Kudriakova sketches the life of Russian émigrés in Britain in the 1920s and 1930s, their cultural and educational activities and various organisations established by Russian émigrés in Britain.

These two studies, although providing highly valuable new information on Russian émigrés in Britain, nevertheless concentrate only on the émigré community itself, and not the reasons behind the development of this community. In this, the policies of the British government clearly played an important role. None of the earlier studies paid much attention to these policies, apart from the notion that only a few Russian émigrés entered to Britain. The main interest of my thesis is to consider the policies of the British government in detail as well as to assess the importance of these policies to the development of the Russian émigré community in Britain.

In the field of refugees Sir John Simpson's *The Refugee Problem* still remains a basic book on different refugee problems in inter-war Europe, including Russian refugees, to which more recent studies often refer. More recent studies on refugees in inter-war Europe include, for example, Claudena Skran's *Refugees in Inter-War Europe* (1995) and Michael Marrus's *The Unwanted: European Refugees in the Twentieth Century* (1985). [51] The main importance of these books is that they provide general context for understanding the Russian refugee problem and particularly the response of the international community to it. Both Skran and Marrus point out that it was particularly because of the Russian refugee problem that the League of Nations decided to establish

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49 Kaznina, Olga. Russkie v Anglii. Russkaia Emigratsiia v Kontekste Russko-Angliiskih Literaturnyh Sviazei v Pervoi Polovine XX veka. Moskva 1997.
50 Kudriakova, Elena. Rossiiskaia Emigratsiia v Velikobritanii v Period Mezhdu Dvumia Voinami. Moskva 1995.
51 For full references of these books see footnotes 1 and 2.

the Office of the High Commissioner for Russian Refugees, a post taken by the Norwegian Explorer, Fritjof Nansen.[52] According to Skran, this action marked the beginning of the international refugee regime and the organised co-operation between states for the assistance of refugees. From this starting-point the international regime gradually increased its scope, as other groups, such as Armenian, Greek, Bulgarian, Turkish and German refugees were included in the assistance schemes.[53]

In this context it is important to consider *why* the international community, namely the League of Nations, decided to take actions for the assistance of refugees. According to Skran, the emergence of refugees as an international issue was related to a wider process; the growth of interdependence of nations after the First World War. In the case of refugees, the mass exodus from one country potentially threatened the economic and social life of a receiving country.[54] Moreover, refugees en masse threatened the security of the receiving countries, causing instability, which could even lead to wars.

Although it is clear that the First World War, and the process of the new nation-state building in the aftermath of the war led to huge refugee movements, there had been mass movements of refugees before the war, such as the Jewish emigration from the Tsarist Russia [55]. However, it was only after the war and the establishment of the League of Nations, that this notion of refugees as a threat to 'international stability' became under closer consideration. The League of Nations had been formed in 1919 by forty-two governments 'in order to promote international co-operation and to achieve international peace and security' [56]. Although the League's decision to take up the role of refugee advocacy was at least to some extent guided by humanitarian motives, the fact that refugees threatened international stability was undoubtedly at least as important motivator.

On British immigration policy in general there are a large number of studies. For example studies by Colin Holmes, such as *John Bull's Island: Immigration and British*

52 Skran 1995, pp. 74, 84-85: Marrus 1985, pp. 86-89.
53 Skran 1995, pp. 66, 84-85.
54 Skran 1995, p. 65.
55 Marrus 1985, p. 26, 51.
56 Skran 1995, p. 30.

Society, 1871-1971 and *A Tolerant Country? Immigrants, Refugees and Minorities in Britain* [57] provide excellent general background on the development of the British immigration policy during the 19th and early 20th centuries. His main conclusions are that the liberal attitude towards immigration, prevalent in Britain for the main part of the 19th century, started to be undermined in the early 20th century. The First World War further increased the anti-alien attitude of the British politicians and public. Consequently, the Aliens Restriction Acts of 1914 and 1919 finally swept away the liberal procedures of the Victorian age regarding immigration.[58] As it will be pointed out in my thesis, this development was clearly evident also in the British government's attitude towards Russian refugees.

My thesis will argue that from very early on the British government adopted a very strict and definite policy of not admitting Russian refugees to Britain. It was officially stated by the government that as a general rule no Russian refugees were admitted to Britain, except in special cases. Therefore, strict provisions for entry prevailed and all visas were issued on an individual basis. In order to be accepted the refugees had to fulfil various requirements, for example, regarding property and personal relations.

All this is particularly interesting when compared with the reputation of Britain as a country of liberal refuge. Thus, my thesis will also suggest that the British policy towards Russian refugees challenge this reputation. The notion of Britain as 'a safe haven for the persecuted of other lands' had prevailed throughout the 19th century. [59] Even if this liberalism had been clearly challenged already in the early 20th century and especially after the First World War and the passing of the Aliens Restriction Acts of 1914 and 1919, there however remained a general agreement on the notion that political refugees should be considered separately. As it will be shown in my thesis, this principle was not however followed in the case of Russian refugees.

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57 Holmes, Colin. John Bulls's Island. Immigration and British Society, 1871-1971. London 1988; Holmes Colin. A Tolerant Country? Immigrants and Minorities in Britain. London 1991.
58 Holmes 1988, pp. 94-116; Holmes 1991, pp. 23-27.
59 Holmes 1988, p. 19.

Chapter 2 of the thesis will discuss the issue of the widening demands for immigration regulations, consider the development of the British immigration policy and the reasons and motives behind the passing of the first pieces of immigration legislation during the early 20th century. The important emphasis of the chapter is the notion of Britain as a liberal country of refuge during the 19th century, and how this liberalism was to be undermined during the 20th century. These considerations provide an important background against which the British government policies on the Russian refugee question will be evaluated in the following chapters.

Chapter 3 deals with the British involvement in the Russian Civil War. Attention will be drawn to the British role as the most important foreign supporter of the White forces; the reasons behind the British involvement in the Civil War; its decision to withdraw British forces from Russia and to eventually discontinue their support for the White Russian forces. The end of the chapter will then concentrate on the refugee problem that was born as a consequence of the defeat of the White armies, whom Britain had been actively supporting. The chapter will point out that despite its active support to the White forces during the Civil War, after their defeat Britain was much less willing to provide assistance to these Russians 'who had remained loyal to the Allied cause'. The British did assist in the evacuation of Russians in North and South Russia, but was careful to avoid any further responsibilities to Russian refugees and upheld strict rules so as to not take them to Britain.

In Chapter 4 the policies of the British government towards White Russian refugees, especially in relation to admission of refugees to Britain will be considered in more detail. As already mentioned, the government adopted a strict attitude against the admission of Russian refugees to Britain. According to the official statements of the Home Office, as a general rule no Russian refugees were admitted to Britain, except in special cases. Therefore, strict rules were set for the entry of individual refugees, for example regarding the financial position of refugees. This was clearly one of the most important requirements for entry, though it was by no means sufficient in itself. However, it was particularly important, as the government refused to maintain any Russian refugees in Britain from the public funds. The importance of economic

considerations can also be seen in that the government remained firmly against admitting refugees for the purpose of employment.

Exceptions were, however, made towards individual refugees, especially if they could support themselves financially, had close business or personal relations in Britain or were likely to be an 'advantage to Britain', as well as for educational and academic purposes. The chapter will evaluate the policies of the British government especially in view of the existing immigration legislation, and whether these policies were consistent with this legislation. The reasons behind the strict policies will also be considered in detail, as well as the effect of these policies on the development of the émigré community in Britain, especially in relation to the numbers and the composition of the community. A further question addressed in this chapter is the policies of the government in maintaining a specific group of refugees as a result of the evacuation of General Denikin's forces. The government policies in this episode were clearly consistent with the general attitude adopted in the refugee question.

In Chapter 5 the emphasis will be on the question of international assistance for Russian refugees. As noted earlier, international actions on behalf of Russian refugees resulted from both humanitarian and political concerns of individual European states. It is important to notice that the Russian refugee problem actually marked the beginnings of the international refugee regime. As an outcome, the Office of the High Commissioner for Russian Refugees was established under the auspices of the League of Nations and the member states of the League participated in various intergovernmental conferences on Russian refugees.

In my thesis the emphasis is particularly on the role of the British government in the work of the international refugee regime, the government's attitude towards the establishment of the Office of the High Commissioner and their participation in its work. The important notion of the chapter is that the British participation in the international co-operative efforts on behalf of Russian refugees was more active than one would have expected on the grounds of its policy towards Russians in the individual level. Thus, compared with a strict policy of not admitting Russian refugees to Britain,

the British government was much more generous in providing, for example, financial assistance for Russian refugees. Behind this seemingly ambivalent attitude, the government was, however clearly guided by selfish motives, as financial assistance was, nevertheless, a more modest way of assisting than admitting refugees to one's country.

Attention will also be drawn to the activity of certain British individuals in the refugee field. In addition, the chapter will evaluate the work and achievements of the international community in general, primarily that of the League of Nations and the High Commissioner's Office, and the importance of this work to the settlement of the Russian refugee problem.

In Chapter 6 the focus is changed from the British government policy to the Russian émigré community that developed in Britain in the early 1920s. The admission policies of the government to a large extent determined the size and the composition of this community, by deciding how many and what kind of people were allowed to come to Britain. My thesis will suggest that this also had a great influence on the further development of the Russian émigré community, for example in regard to the attitudes of the émigrés towards assimilation and their relationship with the British society more generally.

The chapter will concentrate on the early years of the Russian émigré community in Britain, primarily in London, where the majority of émigrés stayed. It will deal with the difficulties that the émigrés faced in their new country, for example the problems in maintaining themselves and the channels through which assistance was given, as well as other questions important to émigrés such as education, religion, social relations and culture. One of the important conclusions of the chapter is that, despite the smallness of the émigré society in Britain, Russian émigrés were very active in their cultural and social life. Various Russian organisations and periodicals were set up in Britain, and émigrés enjoyed a wide variety of cultural and social activities.

In general, Russian émigrés abroad considered it one of their primary tasks in exile to preserve and carry on traditional Russian culture, to be utilised after the collapse of the

Bolshevik regime and their return to Russia. This was especially visible in the countries that hosted large numbers of émigrés and where the émigrés formed close communities, such as Paris, Berlin or Prague. To facilitate the task of preserving Russian culture schools were established for Russian émigré children and various literary, artistic and intellectual circles flourished in the major Russian communities in exile.

Because of the relatively small number of émigrés in Britain, no specific schools for Russian émigré children were established. Instead, children of Russian émigrés mainly got their education in British schools, universities and other educational establishments. This, on its part, clearly promoted the assimilation the of the émigré children into British society. On the other hand, in Paris, Berlin, Prague and some other major cities, the fact that Russian children largely attended the émigré schools had the opposite effect and thus worked towards the preservation of the feelings of Russianness and exclusiveness amongst the émigrés.

In Britain, due at least partly to the smallness of the émigré community, as well as to the fact the children were educated in British schools, assimilation of the Russian émigrés into British society seems to have been easier and quicker than in many other host countries. More generally, the relationship between the British society and Russian émigrés seems to have been quite relaxed. This was probably facilitated both by the smallness and homogeneity of the émigré community in Britain. Thus, it clearly seems that the strong 'selection process' in admission actually furthered easy relations between the host society and émigrés, which, again, made the assimilation process easier for émigrés.

However, this does not mean that Russian émigrés in Britain were not concerned about preserving their Russian identity. Russian identity clearly remained very important, especially to the first generation of Russian émigrés. The preservation of a Russian identity was naturally facilitated by the existence of fellow émigrés. An important role was also played by the Orthodox Church. My thesis, nevertheless, would like to suggest that the preservation of Russian identity did not mean similar isolation from the host society as it did in many other, larger, Russian émigré societies.

Finally, the source material for the thesis deserves some further attention. Despite the small number of published studies, there are nevertheless various documents available. In relation to the attitude of the British government towards Russian refugees and the policies adopted by the government, the official documents of the Foreign Office and the Home Office provide most of the important information. In the general correspondence of the Foreign Office (Class FO 371), for example, there exists a number of documents and letters between the Home Office and the Foreign Office that deal with the question of Russian refugees, starting from early 1918 and continuing through to the 1920s. The Home Office papers, especially class HO 45, also contain much information on the admission of Russian refugees to Britain.

When considering international actions for the assistance of Russian refugees, important material can be found in the *Phillip Noel-Baker papers*, located at the Churchill College Archives Centre, Cambridge. Phillip Noel-Baker worked in the Secretariat of the League of Nations, which had an active role in the refugee affairs inside the League.

At the School of Slavonic and East European Studies there exist two collections that are very useful for the research of British government policies and the case of Russian émigrés in Britain. The *Pares Collection* contains material on British activities in Russia, especially in Siberia, British co-operation with the White forces in Siberia and negotiations for British assistance in the work of 'cultural and educational reconstruction of Russia'. The collection also contains material relating to the educational and employment assistance and other relief work for Russian émigrés and their children. The *Michael Glenny Collection* contains all the material: tapes, articles and memoirs relating to Russian émigrés in the period of 1900-1945, used for compiling the book *The Other Russia* (1990), which has already been mentioned above.

Other collections that hold material on Russian émigrés in Britain include the *Russian Archive* at the Brotherton Library of the University of Leeds, especially the collection of *Sablin family* (MS. 1285), which holds material on Russians in Britain dating from the 1920s onwards. The *H.W. Williams Papers* at the British Library relate to the activities of the Russian Liberation Committee, established in London in early 1919 by some

Russians and British with the aim of the overthrowing of Bolshevism in Russia. The journal of the Liberation Committee, *The New Russia/ Russian Life* and the other publications of the Committee also provide useful material for the thesis, as do some other journals published in Britain in the 1920s, which mainly advocated support for the anti-Bolshevik cause.

An important part of information regarding the émigré community in Britain has been gained by a number of interviews of Russian émigrés carried out specifically for this thesis. These include representatives of both the first generation of émigrés, mainly those who came to Britain as children, as well as the second generation of émigrés, those who were born in Britain.

CHAPTER 2: THE DEVELOPMENT OF BRITISH IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEE POLICY

2.1. 19th Century Developments

During the 19th century Britain was widely perceived as a centre of refuge where the persecuted of other lands could take shelter. In addition its position as the world's major economic power drew labour from less-developed nations. As a result immigrants and refugees arrived in Britain throughout the 19th century.[1] This formal toleration towards refugees was almost unlimited. Between 1826 and 1905, no immigrant or visitor could legally be prevented from landing. In many respects toleration was perhaps greatest towards political refugees. The tolerant attitude towards immigrants was, however, probably less humane than it would seem at first glance, more a benign indifference as immigrants rarely constituted a major inconvenience or danger. Their numbers were never large enough to become a social problem, except for the influx of Jewish refugees from Russian Poland between the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Although Russian Jews were not particularly associated with political extremism, mixed in with this group were, however, individuals who were politically active and involved in anti-Tsarist and revolutionary activities. Among the most famous examples are for example Joe Fineberg, Fedor Rothstein, Maksim Litvinov, Georgii Chicherin and Ivan Maiskii. [2]

Different groups of refugees arrived in Britain from Tsarist Russia throughout the 19th century, including intellectuals, Populists and at the end of the century also anarchists and revolutionaries, for instance those Jewish 'revolutionaries' mentioned above. In general, the number of politically active refugees from Russia, as well as from other European countries increased throughout the 19th century, including such distinguished persons as Victor Hugo, Karl Marx, M. Bakunin, P. Kropotkin and Lenin. Nevertheless, they were never numerous enough to create wide-scale concern among the British authorities. After all, those concerned were still individuals who had chosen their

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[1] Holmes 1988, p. 19.

[2] Porter, Bernard. 'The British Government and Political Refugees', pp. 23-26; Holmes, Colin. 'Immigrants, Refugees and Revolutionaries', pp. 9-13. Both articles in Slatter, John (ed.). From the Other Shore: Russian Political Emigrants in Britain, 1880-1914. London 1984.

political path, rather than large masses of people involved in political activities. The successive British governments therefore largely continued to adopt a benign attitude towards foreign revolutionaries. [3]

Numerically the two major phases of immigration in the 19th century Britain were the Irish of the 1830s, 1840s and 1850s, and the Jewish refugees from Eastern Europe towards the end of the century.[4] The scale of Irish emigration increased considerably after the Act of Union in 1800 by which Ireland became part of the United Kingdom. This movement was particularly evident in the 1840s and 1850s. By 1861 the Irish community in England and Wales had increased to 601,634 with an additional 200,000 in Scotland. [5] The Irish immigrants were met with greater hostility than any previous immigrant community before. Much of the resentment against the Irish was religious but there were clearly racial features, too. The Irish were all considered diseased and lazy and almost all of them were regarded as criminals in the eyes of public opinion.

The 'racial savagery' between the Irish, English and Scots during the 19th century makes all the more remarkable the second main characteristic of the British community's attitudes to immigration - the almost total indifference of the politicians. Despite the considerable feeling within the host community against immigrants, particularly the Irish, this feeling was not translated into a coherent political demand for immigration control either inside or outside Parliament. [6]

The major factor behind the indifferent attitude of British politicians towards immigration was the idealism of Victorian Liberalism. Both parties, especially the Liberals, regarded themselves as champions of the right to political asylum and therefore persecuted foreigners could come to Britain without hindrance. On the economic side, the industrial revolution in the boom years of the early 19th century lapped up labour insatiably and immigration controls were considered irrelevant and

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[3] Marrus 1985, pp. 15-26; Simpson 1939, pp. 62-63.

[4] Bevan, Vaughan. The Development of British Immigration Law. London 1986, p. 64.

[5] Holmes 1988, p. 20.

[6] Foot, Paul. Immigration and Race in British Politics. Harmondsworth 1965, pp. 81-82.

even perceived as a symbol of national decline. This unchallenged supremacy did not, however, last forever. New industrial nations rose to challenge Britain in the world markets and British politicians were to taste the first economic crisis in the country's industrial history. The prolonged economic depression from the 1870s onwards had a serious effect on the earlier endorsement of unrestricted movement of people. As a consequence people started to talk about 'protection' as a solution. [7]

It was at this juncture that Jewish immigration to Britain began in full scale. The Jews had been emigrating in small numbers from Europe and Russia for decades. However, it was in the early 1880s that latent anti-Semitism, especially in Russia, Russian Poland and Romania turned into systematic persecution. The starting point was given by the assassination of Alexander II on 10 March 1881 by a Polish student. This event was not connected with the Jews but was immediately followed by anti-Semitic outbreaks [8]. In the following month a wave of terror spread throughout the provinces. In January 1882, Alexander III's Minister of Interior, Count Ignatiev, made the statement to be published in Jewish journals stating that the Western frontier was open for Jews [9]. In May the Temporary Orders concerning the Jews, (the so called 'May laws') were promulgated. They attacked the basis of Jewish economic life in Russia by prohibiting them for engaging in any business activity on Sundays and Christian holidays. They also aimed at preventing Jews from owning or working land or residing in the agricultural areas and restricted their mobility and rights of residence. [10]

It is estimated that a million Jews left Eastern Europe for the West between 1881 and 1905. By far the greatest number, 800,000, went on to the USA but Britain remained the second largest destination. The mass immigration of Jews proceeded from 1881 to 1905 and continued at a reduced rate after 1905, due to the Aliens Act of that year until

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[7] Foot 1965, p. 84; Cesarani, David. 'An Alien Concept? The Continuity of Anti-Alienism in British Society before 1940', p. 28. In Cesarani, David & Kushner, Tony (eds). The Internment of the Aliens in the Twentieth Century Britain. London: Portland, Or., 1993.

[8] Reports of Commissioners. Royal Commission on Alien Immigration; 1903, Cd 1741, vol. IX, p.3.

[9] Rogger, Hans. Tsarist Policy on Jewish Emigration, p. 28. Soviet Jewish Affairs. Vol. 3, No. 1, 1973.

[10] Gainer, Bernard. The Alien Invasion. The Origins of the Aliens Act of 1905. London 1972, p.1; Lipman, V.D. Social History of the Jews in England, 1850-1950. London 1954, p. 85; Foot 1965, p. 85.

1914.[11] It is estimated that between the 1880 and 1914 about 100-120 thousand Jewish immigrants came to Britain. [12] Taking the natural growth of the Jewish community into account the estimate for the size of the Jewish community in Britain was about 150,000 in 1902-03 and about 180,000 in 1914.[13]

Why did they come to Britain? Naturally the fact that there was no existing immigration control in Britain was an important factor. If the Government did not exactly bestow sympathy, it at least practised tolerance and undesirable aliens were nonetheless permitted to land. [14] The existence of native Jewish community in Britain was also of great importance. The incumbent community could offer not only general encouragement but also the possibility of active assistance for new arrivals.

Ferry-boat routes largely influenced the pattern of immigration settlement in Britain. Most of the immigrant ships docked in London and between 1881 and 1905 about 60 per cent of immigrants lived there. Within London most of them lived in the East End.[15] This was also the case with the Jewish immigrants: they were almost exclusively concentrated in the East End of London. The majority of those who lived outside London were also concentrated in bigger cities, such as Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham and Leeds.[16] In Scotland a Lithuanian community of around 7,000 developed between late 1880s and 1914. They got employment in the coalmines and iron and steel works of Ayshire and Lanarkshire.[17]

Despite the liberal tradition of Britain in relation to the immigrants and refugees, the Jewish immigrants became the group that faced the greatest hostility from the host community as well as from official circles. The first reactions of British public opinion

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[11] Lipman 1954, p. 85.

[12] Lipman 1954, p. 87; Foot 1965, p. 86.

[13] Lipman 1954, pp.99-100.

[14] Gainer 1975, p. 2.

[15] Jones, Catherine. Immigration and Social Policy in Britain. London 1977, pp. 69-70.

[16] Lipman, V.D. A History of the Jews in Britain Since 1858. London 1990, p. 16.

[17] Rodgers, Murdoch. 'The Anglo-Russian Military Convention and the Lithuanian Immigrant Community in Lanarkshire, Scotland, 1914-20', pp. 61-62. Immigrants and Minorities, Vol. 1, No. 1, March 1982; Rodgers, Murdoch. 'Political developments in the Lithuanian Community in Scotland, 1890-1923', p. 141. In Slatter (ed.) 1984.

to the persecution of the Jews had been sympathetic. The Lord Mayor of London convened a great meeting of protest against the persecution at the Mansion House in February 1882. However, when these Jews decided to come to Britain at the time of the worsening economic conditions, their reception was somewhat less sympathetic. [18] Thus, whatever difficulties the Irish had to face they nevertheless encountered less hostility than this much smaller group from Russian Poland and Russia.[19]

The 'material' reasons clearly played an important role in the hostilities towards Jewish immigrants. Actually without the economic deprivation and social concern, the immigrants in the East End might have gone unnoticed.[20] The mass immigration of Jews took place at the time of prolonged and severe recession within the British economy. The industrial slump of the 1880s also coincided with an agricultural depression. At the end of the 19th century the harsh reality of mass unemployment could not be without effect on the host society's reactions towards the Jewish immigrants.[21]

What is, however, impossible to measure is how different the reactions of the native population would have been had not the immigrants been so visibly different from them.[22] The impression of strangeness was enhanced by the appearance of the people themselves: their clothes, speech and behaviour. Some reactions were more obviously to do with the immigrants as strangers. The English were not known as great lovers of foreigners and the novelty and quantity of Jews in the cities made them likely targets for xenophobia. If the Irish were accused of being roughs and drunkards, the Jews were charged with more sinister transgressions. They were considered to be liars and were often accused of petty crime and vice. [23]

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[18] Gartner, Loyd P. The Jewish Immigrant in England, 1870-1914. London 1973, p. 275; Lipman 1990, p. 67.

[19] Holmes 1991, p. 83.

[20] Gainer 1972, p. 166.

[21] Taylor, Simon. A Land of Dreams. A Study of Jewish and Caribbean Migrant Communities in Britain. London; New York 1993, p. 32.

[22] Jones 1977, p. 74.

[23] Lunn, Kenneth (ed.). Hosts, Immigrants and Minorities. Historical Responses to Newcomers in British Society, 1870-1914. Folkestone 1980, pp.112-15.

Other charges held against Jewish immigrants were that they were destitute and dirty, included criminals, anarchists and immoral persons, provided cheap labour for sweated industry and by competition depressed English workers' wages. [24] The so called sweating system was an important part in the Jewish question. This was described as a system ' under which subcontractors undertake to do work in their own houses and workshops, and employ others to do it, making a profit for themselves by the difference between the contract prices and the wages they pay their assistants'. Because Jewish immigrants were willing to work for less money than the English and additionally could not speak English, which meant that it was more difficult to find alternative work, a majority of sweated workers were Jewish. [25]

The main consideration which the newcomers were judged by were largely the same as those of the Irish immigrants earlier namely public health and morals, standards of living, employment, law and order. However, two new important themes were housing and education. Apart from lowering the tone and threatening the sanitary standards of the East End, the Jews were also accused of aggravating or even creating a local housing shortage. Their presence served apparently to drive up the rents and increase the overall rate of overcrowding in the East End. The landlords took advantage of the situation by increasing the rents and, even though the majority of the immigrants were not wealthier than the natives, their options were more restricted. In most cases they were dependent on remaining within the East End of London, to a greater extent than even the local population.[26]

During the last two decades of the 19th century Jewish immigration became a party political issue. The issue first emerged in the early 1880s and continued to be the major issue in party politics during the whole period before the passing of the 1905 Aliens Act. During the period of 1880 to 1888, much of the anti-alien agitation outside

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[24] Lipman 1954, pp. 134-35.
[25] Bevan 1986, p. 67.
[26] Jones 1977, pp. 72-77.

Parliament seems to have been fairly moderate and most of the pressure, at this stage, was still exerted behind the scenes. [27]

The political parties were, however, clearly divided on the immigration question. The Liberal Party, apart from few individual exceptions, was a defender of free immigration whilst the Conservatives were against it. Historically, protection was enshrined in Conservative Party dogma, while the Liberals worshipped free trade.[28] The fact that the immigrants were Jewish created a special situation for the Liberals. The driving force behind the Liberal attitude was in their ideology. The immigrant was poor, a religious refugee and he was a Jew. At a time when the Liberals were also threatened with no longer being the sole party of the left, the Jewish question provided unity for Liberals; an act of nostalgia. To attack the destitute Jewish immigrant was to attack Liberalism.[29]

The Liberals were in office between 1880 and 1885 and again between 1892 and 1895.[30] Their almost unanimous opposition to the anti-alien legislation largely explains why no legislation was passed despite the growing demands for it. However, it has to be pointed out that also the Conservatives, in office from 1886 to 1892 and from 1895 to 1905 [31] by and large supported the doctrine of free immigration from 1888 to 1892. It was only after this that their policies were changed, largely because they saw the electoral advantage of the aliens' issue. [32] From the beginning the individual supporters of the immigration restriction, however, came almost without exception from the Conservative Party.

Meanwhile the Liberal Party had undergone a split with the Liberal-Unionists moving nearer to the position of the Conservative Party. By 1895 they were in the alliance with the Conservative Party by joining Salisbury's Conservative Cabinet in an Unionist

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[27] Garrard, John A. The English and Immigration, 1880-1910. London 1971, pp. 23-26.
[28] Gainer 1972, p. 144.
[29] Garrard 1971, pp. 79-85.
[30] Morgan, Kenneth O. (ed.). The Oxford History of Britain. Oxford 1993, pp. 702-03.
[31] Ibid., p. 703.
[32] Gainer 1972, p. 144, 166-68.

government. [33] The most prominent 'protectionists' and 'restrictionists' among the Unionists were Joseph Chamberlain, Sir Charles Howard Vincent and Major Evans-Gordon. They worked actively inside the Parliament for restriction from the 1890s and also played an important part in the later projects for alien legislation of the early 1900s. They also had clearly anti-Semitic views even if in public they denied charges of anti-Semitism. Chamberlain, for example stated that 'there is only one race that I despise - the Jews'. Yet he denied to Herzl that anti-Semitism existed in Britain. Sir Howard Vincent not only denied anti-Semitism but even anti-foreign bias, and claimed that his only criterion was 'British interest'. [34]

The fact that there were no reliable statistics of the actual size of the immigration led to the ludicrous claims being made both inside and outside Parliament. The statistics of the Board of Trade, as well as other offices, were wide of the mark because of the lack of reliable methods of collecting information. Still the restrictionists were convinced that the statistics underestimated the number of the immigrants and came up with dizzying figures.[35]

The Select Committee of Inquiry, set up in 1888, reported on immigration in August 1889. The main conclusions of the Committee were that 1) it was impossible to state with accuracy the number of aliens in the UK, 2) the alien population was not numerous enough to create alarm, 3) the better class immigrants only arrived in transit but the poorest and worst class remained in the UK, 4) the immigrants worked longer hours and for lower wages than English workmen. The Committee recommended that more accurate and detailed data should be collected about the aliens who remained in England. The final conclusion of the Committee was that while it was not prepared to recommend legislation at present, they contemplated the possibility of such legislation becoming necessary in the future. [36]

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[33] Finestein, Israel. The Jewish Society in Victorian England: collected essays. London; Portland 1993, p. 209; Morgan 1993, p. 571.

[34] Finestein 1993, p. 209; Gainer 1972, pp. 94-97, 118-120.

[35] Gainer 1972, pp. 6-11.

[36] Reports of the Commissioners. Royal Commission on Alien Legislation; 1903, Cd 1741, Vol IX, pp. 4-5.

Despite the failure of legislative actions during the period from 1888 to 1895, the anti-alien atmosphere became stronger and wider. The Trades Union Congress passed anti-alien resolutions in 1892, 1894 and 1895. These clearly indicated the feelings prevalent at the time among organised labour. [37] In 1894 the Marquess of Salisbury introduced a bill for the control of immigration in the House of Lords. The Bill was given a second reading in the House of Lords by 89 to 37 voters but went no further. It was strongly opposed by Lord Rosebery, the Liberal Prime Minister. [38]

Four years later Lord Hardwicke re-introduced almost the same Bill in the House of Lords and asked for the support of Salisbury, who was then Prime Minister in the Unionist government. Ironically, Salisbury had brought in his Bill in 1894 in order to embarrass Lord Rosebury, and now that the Unionists were back in power, he did not wish to be reminded of the measure. However, since the Unionist Party was by then officially committed to it, Salisbury had to give the Bill his support.

According to Liberal opinion, the worst failure of the Bill was that it made no mention of the right of asylum and gave Board of Trade inspectors the power to exclude a political refugee on grounds of destitution.[39] Sir Charles spoke for all Liberals when he declared that every Jewish immigrant was a religious refugee and referred to the principle of the right of asylum. The restrictionists opposed this argument with the counter-argument that there was no such thing as a 'right' of asylum and that the principle was anyway safeguarded because religious and political refugees were outside the scope of the legislation proposed.[40]

The Bill passed through all its stages in the House of Lords. [41] Since Salisbury had stated right at the beginning that there was no time to consider the measure in the Commons, this was, however, a barren victory. On the whole, the period from 1895 to 1900 can be classified as a period of 'obscurity' on the immigration question. The

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[37] Alderman, Geoffrey. Modern British Jewry. Oxford 1992, p. 131.

[38] Finestein 1993, pp. 215-16.

[39] Gainer 1972, pp. 157-59; Foot 1965, pp. 86-87.

[40] Gainer 1972, pp. 162-63.

[41] Reports of the Commissioners. Royal Commission on Alien Immigration; 1903, Cd 1741, Vol. IX, p. 5.

election of the Conservatives did not reverse the decline in the campaign for anti-alien legislation. This was partly linked to the Government's unwillingness to be associated with anti-Semitism, especially as the restriction had served its purpose for the Unionist Government in the elections of 1895 with the victory over the Liberals. Agitation outside Parliament also seemed to be in decline due to declining unemployment and a steady level of immigration.

A change occurred at the beginning of the twentieth century. The outburst of anti-Semitism in Russia and Romania reversed the declining exodus. During 1900 about 3,000 Romanian Jews reached England and a further mass exodus took place between 1903 and 1904 after a series of outrages in Russian cities and again in the pogroms following the 1905 Russian Revolution. [42]

All this coincided with the worsening employment situation in Britain which gave those in favour of immigration controls the opportunity to start pushing for restrictions. The turn of the century marks a turning point in the nature and scope of anti-alien atmosphere, as the issue also moved 'on the streets' of London. The first organisation devoted to the restriction of immigration was established in 1901 by William Shaw. This was the British Brothers' League, which was to lead the people's protest against 'the East End of London...becoming the dustbin of Europe into which all sorts of human refuse is shot'.[43] The basis of the League's organisation was the East End working man, and Sir William Evans-Gordon, the Conservative MP for Stepney, had an important part in its construction.

The League maintained a spurious claim to be putting national interest above party politics but in reality it had strong links with the Conservative Party organisation in the East End. The ideology of the British Brothers' League was also clearly politically anti-Semitic [44] and its aim was to press for restrictive legislation. [45]

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[42] Garrard 1971, pp. 34-36; Gainer 1972, p. 180; Foot 1965, p. 86.
[43] Taylor 1993, p. 173.
[44] Englander (ed.) 1994, p. 247.
[45] Gainer 1972, pp. 68-69; Taylor 1993, pp. 176-77.

Mass meetings were the League's well-tried formula to exploit to best advantage the enthusiasm created by the aliens' question. The first meeting was held in Stepney in March 1901 and the hall was packed to overflowing, as was the case with all subsequent meetings. [46]

The activities of the League began to taper off towards the end of 1903 at least partly because anti-alien Tory MPs attempted to distance themselves, alarmed by its descent into rabid anti-Semitism. However, it is clear that the League had an important role in pushing for immigration restrictions. In January 1902 Evans-Gordon moved an amendment to the King's Speech in the House of Commons demanding immediate immigration control. He insisted that immigration was not objected to because the newcomers were Jews but 'purely on social and economic grounds'. [47]

2.2. Towards Immigration Regulations: Aliens Act 1905 and Its Followers

The outcome of the actions of Evans-Gordon and his Conservative associates was that the Government promised to appoint a Royal Commission on the Alien Question. The seven-man Commission, under Lord James, was appointed on 21 March 1902 to inquire and report on 1) the character and extent of the evils which are attributed to the unrestricted immigration of aliens, especially in the metropolis; 2) the measures which had been adopted for the restriction and control of alien immigration in foreign countries and British colonies; and 3) to advise on what remedial and precautionary measures it thought was desirable to adopt in the UK. [48]

In the summer of 1903 the Royal Commission reported after hearing a mountain of evidence and examination of charges made by the anti-alien lobby over the previous

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[46] Alderman 1992, p. 134; Gainer 1971, pp. 69-71.
[47] Finestein 1993, p. 223; Foot 1965, pp. 88-89.
[48] Lipman 1990, p. 70.

years, as well as evidence from Jewish witnesses. At its conclusion the Commission stated that it seemed to be established that a large number of alien immigrants had entered the country during the last 20 years and that it was mainly composed of Russian and Polish Jews. However, the Commission found that the charges of the restrictionists, especially regarding the numbers of immigrants, were inaccurate and exaggerated. The number of immigrants in Britain was still very small compared with other countries. Only 0.609 per cent of the British population were aliens while the figures in some other countries were: Germany 1.38, France 2.66, Austria 1.98 and Switzerland 9.58 per cent respectively.

The Commission did not find substance in the claim that Jewish immigrants were taking jobs from British workers. However, it found greater substantial evidence to allegations that by congregating in certain parts of cities, immigrants were to some extent responsible for the shortage of housing and increase in rents. The Commission was unanimous in its view that there was no case for the total exclusion of alien immigrants from Britain. However, they formed the view that it was necessary to regulate the entry of certain classes of immigrants, especially those arriving from Eastern Europe. They also thought that special regulations should be made for the purpose of preventing aliens choosing their residence within districts that were already overcrowded. [49]

As a practical recommendation, the Commission formed the view that a Department of Immigration should be established either in connection with the Board of Trade or as an independent unit. This Immigration Department should have the power to make and enforce orders and regulations that might be made applicable to immigrants generally, or to vessels arriving at, or from, certain ports, or to certain classes of immigrants. They also stated that there should be a provision for medical examination of alien immigrants at the port of arrival and that in case of infectious disease or mental incapacity, the medical officer should have power to prevent such immigrant from landing. The other undesirable groups that might be prevented from landing were criminals, prostitutes,

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[49] Reports of the Commissioners. Royal Commission on Alien Immigration; 1903, Cd 1741, Vol. IX, p. 40; Foot 1965, pp. 89-90.

and those likely to become a charge on public funds.[50] The last provision was very significant because it was the one that could most effectively be used for preventing poor Jewish immigrants from landing in the country. This had been the most important reason for the Liberal opposition of Salisbury's and Hardinge's Bills in the 1890s and it became an important issue once again.

The Tories around Vincent and Evans-Gordon were jubilant. Their demands for rigid controls on immigration were no longer merely the outpourings of reactionary Tories, but were now written into the recommendations of the Royal Commission. It is also clear that Balfour's (Unionist) Government was not by this time particularly worried about the aliens lobby. The Conservatives, who had been in power, almost without interruption, for twenty years were torn internally by the powerful protection lobby around Chamberlain and stubborn in their opposition to any social reform for the working class. Vincent and Evans-Gordon might have actually supplied an answer that could please all the warring factions of their own party and had the added advantage of winning a few cheap votes around the East End. [51]

In February 1904 the King's Speech announced the birth of the Government Aliens Bill, which followed the recommendations of the Royal Commission. In pages it was longer than any of its predecessors but its provisions were rather simple and vague. Its main provision was to empower the Home Secretary, through immigration officers, to prohibit, without appeal, the landing of any alien who had been convicted in a foreign country of crime in previous years; who was likely to become a charge on public funds; who was without means of visible means of support; and, finally, who was 'of notoriously bad character'.

The Bill came up for second reading in April, at which time the Liberals opposed it vigorously on the grounds that it constituted an attack on political asylum and that the problems were best met by anti-sweating legislation. The Government's defence was

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[50] Reports of Commissioners. Royal Commission on Alien Immigration; 1903, Cd 1741, Vol. IX, p. 41; Lipman 1990, p. 71.

[51] Foot 1965, pp. 92-93.

inept and the spokesmen of government denied that real refugees or aliens of good quality would be kept out at all. In the Grand Committee, the fierce Liberal opposition under the leadership of Winston Churchill led to the rejection of the Bill, though with fervent assurances for its re-introduction in the future.[52]

After the withdrawal of the Bill there was pressure for its reintroduction throughout the winter from the Unionist MPs. Also the Government by now may have had its own reasons for wishing to push the Bill through Parliament. While immigration continued to rise, a series of heavy by-election defeats at the beginning of the year 1905, a probable election year, made the Government's position difficult. Soon the Conservative Central Office was circulating anti-alien and anti-Liberal leaflets. [53]

The new Bill introduced on 18 April 1905 was an improvement over its egregious predecessor. There were several omissions from the Royal Commission's recommendations [54]. It did not mention overcrowded 'prohibited areas' or certificates of good character. The Bill stipulated that immigrant ships were permitted to land only at eight designated ports and that aliens could be refused to land if they could not prove they had the means of decently supporting themselves and their dependants, or if they were insane, idiots or likely to become a charge on the rates through disease or infirmity (a significant modification) or if they had been sentenced abroad for a non-political crime. However, permission to land was not to be refused on grounds of poverty if the immigrant could prove that he or she was a refugee from religious or political persecution.[55] This recognition of the right of asylum was an important feature of the first aliens legislation, as this clause was not to be included in the following immigration legislation.

There were no new features in the debates. By this time the Labour Members had joined the Liberals in opposing the Bill. During the earlier Bill, the Labour Party, although

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[52] Garrard 1971, pp. 41-43.

[53] Gainer 1972, pp. 189-90; Garrard 1971, pp. 43-44.

[54] Evans, J.M. Immigration Law. Modern Legal Studies. London 1983, p. 7.

[55] Aliens Act, 1905. Public General Statutes, Vol. 43-44, pp. 22-23; Gainer 1972, p. 191; Evans 1983, pp. 6-7.

moving toward a strong pro-alien stand, had not spoken against the Bill and had even abstained from voting. This time they took even stronger position than the Liberals against the Bill and all four members of the Labour Representative Committee voted in an unwhipped division on the Second Reading of the Aliens Bill in 1905.[56]

However, a more important change for the future of the Bill was the one that had happened inside the Liberal Party. Although the opposition by Dilke and Trevelyan and some other leading pro-aliens of the Liberal Party was as strong as earlier, the overall Liberal opposition to the Bill was considerably less effective. Most of the front bench abstained from voting altogether on the grounds that this was 'a different Bill'. The Government, on the other hand, had prepared its case much more carefully than earlier. On 19 July, the House voted to give the Bill its third reading by 193 to 103. It was forced rapidly, and without amendments, through the Lords and by the end of August it had become law.[57] It came into operation on the first of January 1906. [58]

In 1906 the future of the Act was obscure. The 1906 election cut short Tory rejoicing at its passage as the election gave the biggest trouncing in its political history. Of the twelve Conservative East End MPs, only William Evans Gordon and Claud Hay returned to witness the further emasculation of the Act by the Liberal Home Secretary. Mr. Herbert Gladstone, the Home Secretary in the new Liberal Government was faced with the difficult task of carrying out an Act, which he and his party had opposed. However, he decided not to repeal the act but made some immediate concessions to the radicals in his own party and in the Labour Party. [59]

The actual effect of the modifications by Gladstone is very difficult to assess. What can be stated definitely is that during the first five years of its operation, the ratio of those rejected to those liable to inspection was generally low. It seems that the Liberals did as much as was possible to soften the effect of the Act without actually amending or

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[56] Garrard 1971, p. 184; Gainer 1972, p.191-92.

[57] Garrard 1971, pp. 44-47; Gainer 1972, pp. 193-94.

[58] Aliens Act, 1905. Public General Statutes, Vol. 43-44, p. 27.

[59] Foot 1965, p. 99.

repealing it. There was a decline in the number of immigrants following the 1905 Act but it was not a very severe one and later, in 1912 and 1913 the number of immigrants again increased. In spite of the spasmodic demands from the 'anti-alienists', the Liberal Government did not consider restricting the flow further.[60]

In the light of subsequent legislation the Aliens Act 1905 seems a modest measure. Its principal provisions were to prohibit aliens from landing the United Kingdom other than at designated ports and with a leave of an immigration officer. However, the Act did not become 'dead letter', as manifested by some supporters of stricter restriction of aliens. The Act provided immigration authorities with powers to prevent the landing of 'undesirable' immigrants, those who could not prove they had means of supporting themselves and who therefore were likely to become a charge upon the rates. Similarly, the Home Secretary could deport undesirable aliens on similar grounds to those on which they could be excluded. Moreover, the Act was clearly the first demonstration of the Government's preparedness to respond to political pressures on immigration from both inside and outside Parliament. [61]

The outbreak of the First World War increased xenophobia in Britain significantly and heightened pressure for the stricter control of foreigners and immigrants. Suddenly all the Liberal arguments of asylum and the talks about the free haven of Britain were washed away by a single act passed through its parliamentary stages on a single day. The Liberal Home Secretary, Reginald McKenna, asked leave of the House of Commons to introduce the Aliens Restriction Act. The purpose of that Act was 'in time of war or imminent national danger to impose restriction on aliens'.[62] The primary justification was the need to protect the security of the realm from the activities of alien spies. The Act gave the Executive wide powers over aliens. It enabled the state, through the agency of the Home Secretary and immigration officers, to impose restrictions on aliens by giving the Home Office powers to prohibit aliens from landing and embarking

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[60] Lipman 1954, p. 143; Garrard 1971, p.106-07.

[61] Evans 1983, pp. 6-9.

[62] The Aliens Restriction Act, 1914. Public General Statutes, Vol. LII, p. 26. ; Foot 1965, p. 101.

in the UK, to deport aliens from the UK and the ability to regulate the areas where aliens could live in the UK. [63]

The outbreak of the war usually has a tendency both to divide and reinforce, to draw a distinction between 'them' and 'us'. [64] In this light the fact that the Germans faced opposition both from the public and government is hardly surprising. From August 1914 to May 1915, with the powers given by the Act, the government implemented a policy of selective arrest and internment of about 10,000 Germans and Austrians of military age. In addition, women and children and men above or below military age were encouraged to return to their countries of origin. After the Germans sank the Lusitania on 7 May 1915, a wave of popular xenophobia prompted the Government to order the internment of all enemy alien males and the systematic repatriation of women and children. The number of those interned rose to 32,000 and 10,000 were forcibly deported over a period of next two years.[65]

The British attitude towards Belgian minority also offers an interesting case. Following the German violation of Belgian neutrality, a number of Belgian refugees were admitted to Britain. By 1919 about 240,000 Belgian refugees were registered in Britain. [66] Initially the Belgians received widespread sympathy from a British public who admired the courageousness of the Belgians stand against the Germans. Several private philanthropic organisations were also assisting the refugees, and led to the formation of the War Refugees Committee in August 1914. Importantly, the interest in the refugees also spread beyond private charities. By October the Local Government Board was regulating the arrival and welfare of the refugees.

Further evidence of the government's wish to exercise control over the Belgians was the decision on compulsory registration of refugees. [67] Under the Aliens Restriction

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[63] The Aliens Restriction Act, 1914. Public General Statutes, Vol. LII, pp. 26-27; Evans 1983, p. 10; Holmes 1991, pp. 26-27.

[64] Holmes 1991, p. 23.

[65] Cesarani.' An Alien Concept?', p. 35. In Cesarani &Kusher (eds) 1993.

[66] Holmes 1988, p. 87.

[67] Holmes 1988, pp. 99-101; Holmes 1991, p. 25.

(Belgian Refugees) Order 1914, the government ordered a central register of the Belgian refugees to be kept by the Registrar General. Belgian refugees were required to comply with certain requirements in registration, such as furnishing the registration officer in the district they were resident with full particulars. The 1914 Order also prohibited Belgians to reside in any prohibited areas unless provided with a permit issued by the registration officer. [68]

The Belgian refugees were also directly affected by the conscription measure introduced by the government in January 1916 as a response to the insufficient number of volunteers for country's military requirements. The conscription issue became a cause for antipathy towards Belgians who did not always respond positively to conscription. In addition, despite the generally widespread sympathy towards the refugees, different opinions on the refugees had been visible from the beginning. *The Times*, for example, had soon after the arrival of the first refugees complained about Belgian workers invading Britain. Opposition was also emerged from the ranks of organised labour, concerned at possible implications for employment as a consequence of the influx of refugees.[69]

The anticipated use of powers that the Aliens Restriction Act of 1914 gave to government agencies rested on the premise that friendly and enemy aliens could be distinguished. As shown with the case of Belgian refugees, in practice this proved to be very difficult and was to have a direct effect on Jewish refugees in Britain. The resentment towards Russian Jews was further intensified because of the reluctance of some Jews to serve in the Allied forces. The main opinion of Anglo-Jewry was that they should support the war and on the whole they played an active part in the war. However, there were those among the immigrants of the late 19th and early 20th century who had no desire to fight in the same side as their former country of oppression. Moreover, the socialists of the group declared their total opposition to any involvement in the 'capitalist war'. As a consequence some took advantage of their

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[68] The Aliens Restriction (Belgian Refugees) Order, 1914. Statutory Rules and Orders 1914, Vol. I, pp. 27-29.
[69] Holmes 1988, pp. 102-03; Holmes 1991, p. 25.

Russian nationality to evade both voluntary military service and conscription. The public resentment towards Russian Jews, as earlier, assumed anti-Semitic dimensions.[70]

The attitude of those Jews who refused to take part in the military service became also increasingly unacceptable to the Government. Consequently, in July 1917 the British and Russian Governments signed a Military Service Convention by which Russian Jews could be compelled to serve in either the Russian or the British armed forces.[71] An important provision of the Convention was that males of Russian nationality who declined to be conscripted into the British forces were made liable to deportation. Further hostilities, related to the conscription issue, occurred after the signing of the Convention. The most serious incident happened in Bethnal Green, London, in September, where 5,000 demonstrators became involved in violence [72].

The Home Office estimated that by December 1917 about 4,500 Russians had left the country under the Convention. [73] After the war, the question of the future of the families of those Jews who had left caused a new problem to the British government. By the decision of the Treasury, these families received support from the British government until the end of March 1920. The withdrawal of funds forced the families to accept the repatriation 'offer'. As part of this exercise for example about six hundred women and children, members of the small Lithuanian community in Scotland, were repatriated to Russia between February and March 1920. [74] The Russian Dependants' Committee, consisting of voluntary workers, took over the task of helping remaining families from the government. [75]

The conscription issue was never fully settled in a manner that suited the British government. The only real satisfaction it received was through the deportation of certain 'revolutionary' Russians such as Chicherin and Petrov who were both strong opponents

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[70] Cesarani . 'An Alien Concept', pp. 35-36; Holmes 1988, p. 103; Holmes 1991, p. 25.

[71] Alderman 1992, pp. 237-38; Rodgers. 'The Anglo-Russian Military Convention...', p. 61. Immigrants and Minorities, Vol. 1, No. 1, March 1982.

[72] Holmes 1988, pp. 104-05.

[73] HO 45/11522, File 287235, Part II. Census of Aliens, Ist July, 1917.

[74] Rodgers, p. 149. In Slatter (ed.). From the Other Shore. G.B 1984; Holmes 1991, pp. 26-27

[75] Englander (ed.) 1994, p. 337.

of the war and, even more importantly, socialists. [76] Clear connections can be seen between the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia and not only anti-Bolshevist but also anti-Semitic feelings in Britain. There is no doubt that anti-Semitism received a great fillip as a result of the Russian Revolution, both because of the prominence of a number of Jews in the Bolshevik leadership and because of association of Jews with Bolshevism in general.

These exaggerated perceptions of the Jewish role in the Bolshevik Revolution were also accompanied with the allegations of Jewish complicity in the murder of the Tsar and his family. Anti-alienism, anti-Semitism and anti-Bolshevism, therefore, were common features of British politics at the time of the Russian Revolution and Allied intervention in the Russian Civil War and hostile attitudes towards Jews appeared in politics, the Civil service, the military and the press. [77]

The end of the war did not have much effect on the anti-alien feeling in Britain. The deportation of Jews continued to take place under the existing legislation. The government also refused to re-admit those who were unable to prove evidence of military service in the allied cause during the war or intervention in Russia. The anti-alien feeling was by no means limited to Jewish immigrants from the Eastern Europe. The German immigrants had had their share of anti-Semitism already during and after the war, even though it was the 1930s which properly revealed the apogee of anti-Semitism in inter-war Britain, fuelled by the prospect of an increasing number of Jewish exiles from central Europe. The Irish immigrants also began to feel the anti-alien feeling of the public in inter-war years, as did the black minority and other groups from the British Empire.

Those at the centre of the British politics did not show great enthusiasm for the arrival of the refugees, either. [78] One of the first Bills introduced by the Lloyd George coalition

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[76] Holmes 1988, p. 105; Slatter, p. 3. In Slatter (ed.) From the Other Shore. 1984.

[77] Kadish, Sharman. Bolsheviks and British Jews. The Anglo-Jewish Community, Britain and the Russian Revolution. London; Portland, Or., 1992, pp. 6-8; Holmes, Colin. Anti-Semitism in British Society 1876-1939. London 1979, pp. 141-42.

[78] Holmes 1991, pp. 27-35.

Government after the war was the Aliens Restriction Bill. The main aim of the Bill was 'to continue and extend the provisions of the 1914 Act'. Mr Edward Shortt, the new Liberal Home Secretary, was careful to explain that the new Act would only last for the next two years. In his view the country was still in a state of emergency. The speeches in the Parliament, however, clearly witnessed the anti-alien, anti-Semitic and anti-German feelings of many members of the Parliament. The anti-alien lobby also started tabling amendments to the original Bill, in particular, allowing for the deportation of all former aliens. In October 1919 Lloyd George received a deputation of the anti-alien lobby and agreed to let the clause through. Opposition to the Bill came only from the Labour Party and in particular from Josiah Wedgewood, who had originally entered the parliament as a Liberal but had crossed the floor to the Labour Party in April 1919. Despite Labour resistance, the Bill was enacted in December 1919. [79]

The 1919 Act extended the 1914 Act into peacetime. More remarkably, although initially passed for one year, it was in fact renewed annually until 1971 [80]. Even if the Act was primarily concerned with imposing restrictions on aliens already within the UK, rather than with immigration [81], it also contained several measures against immigration. The Act endowed the Home Secretary and immigration officers with considerable powers over the entry, employment and deportation of aliens and thus constituted an important landmark in the state's control over alien immigration. [82] By now, at the latest, it was clear that the liberal procedures of the Victorian age were history. [83]

By the passing of the 1919 Act, the Aliens Act 1905 was repealed. This meant that the immigrants' rights of appeal, secured in the 1905 Act, were swept away. This remained the case until 1969 when the Immigration Appeals Act was passed which meant that between 1919 and 1969 there was no legal guarantee of due process in the

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79 Foot 1965, pp. 104-06; Cesarani.' An Alien Concept', p. 38. In Cesarani & Kushner (eds.) 1993.
80 Holmes 1988, p. 113.
81 Gordon, Paul. Policing Immigration. Britain's Internal Controls. London 1985, p. 9.
82 Holmes 1991, pp. 26-27.
83 Holmes 1988, p. 114.

administration of immigration law. [84] The absence of the right of appeal was explained by the unsatisfactory nature of the arrangements under the 1905 Act and the 'experimental' character of the 1919 Act.

Also the statutory recognition of the right of asylum for political refugees was not included, despite of the strong pressure from Lieutenant-Commander Kenworthy. Instead, assurances were given by the Home Secretary, Edward Shortt, that any 'decent political refugee' would be admitted to Britain, even if there was no special clause for this in the law. The fact that many members of the Russian Royal family were in Britain at the moment was given as an example. However, Mr. Shortt insisted that the clause which would guarantee that no political refugee shall be refused the right of asylum in the UK, demanded by Kenworthy, would oblige the Secretary of the State to admit anybody, 'no matter if he were the most blood-stained murderer in the history of Russia'. [85]

On the other hand, the fact that the Tsar and his family were killed had probably influenced the government's willingness to offer asylum to other members of the Russian royal family. The government might even have felt some guilt over their destiny, as during 1917 several enquiries were made from the Russian side for the Tsar and his family to come to Britain, but the British government had been reluctant to accept them. In any case, as Lord Balfour had remarked already in 1905: 'The truth was that the only immemorial right of asylum given by this country was to allow aliens in with whom the country agreed'. [86]

The fact that there was no real 'right' of asylum meant that the refugees who were permitted to enter Britain were admitted on a purely temporary basis, on the assumption that they would eventually re-emigrate and certainly on the basis that they would not at any point become a charge on the state. There was, for instance, a general understanding between the Jewish community and the British government that the Jews

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[84] Juss 1993, p. 33.

[85] House of Commons. Official Report (vol.4), Standing Committee A, 16th of July, 1919, col. 294-302; Evans 1983, p. 10.

[86] Gainer 1972, p. 209.

would look after their own without recourse to public funds [87]. The provisions of the Aliens Restriction Act of 1919 and particularly the Aliens Order of 1920 enabled the British government to refuse entry into Great Britain of any alien who could not demonstrate that he or she had a means of support, other than through obtaining employment, while in Britain.[88]

The Aliens Order, 1920, in accordance with the 1919 Act remained on the statute books, with few amendments, until a new order in 1953. [89] The Order listed at length restrictions on the landing of aliens. Included were provisions that an alien could not land in the UK except with the leave of an immigration officer and that leave to land should not be given to an alien unless he was in a position to support himself and his dependants and had not been prohibited from landing by the Secretary of State. [90]

The new Order also ensured that from now on aliens in general would only be admitted subject to conditions. Aliens who sought entry into Britain for the purpose of employment had to possess a work permit issued to an employer by the Ministry of Labour. These work permits were available only for certain classes of work for which British or resident alien labour was not available. Permission for certain categories of workers, such as doctors, to be admitted without permits was given by the Home Secretary in his 'General Instructions'. [91] Moreover, the requirement of the work permit finally established a linkage between economic conditions and immigration control, and was to become a cornerstone of immigration legislation. [92] The provision relating to work permits can be directly linked to the post-war economic depression, unemployment and the consequential discontent this caused in the British public. Even if economic conditions had clearly influenced already the passing of the 1905 Act, it

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87 Holmes 1988, p. 142.

88 Alderman 1992, p. 276.

89 Gordon 1985, p. 11.

90 The Aliens Order, 1920. Statutory Rules & Orders 1920. Vol. I, pp. 139-40.

91 Juss 1993, p. 38.

92 Cesarani. An Alien Concept, p. 39. In Cesarani and Kushner (eds.) 1993.

was only after the First World War that the protection of the labour market from the foreign competition was unequivocally linked to immigration policy. [93]

The Aliens Order of 1920 also further extended the Home Secretary's power to deport, on his or her own initiative, any alien whose presence was not 'conducive to the public good'. The Home Secretary in his circular advised the chiefs of police that deportation would not 'as a rule' be ordered simply where someone had been convicted but not recommended for deportation. However, the 'rule' was very quickly broken: A Russian Jewish émigré, Henrik Breslov, was prosecuted in 1922 for giving his passport to someone who spoke better English in order to obtain a visa. He was fined £20 by the court and a prosecution request for deportation was turned down. The Home Office, however, took a different view and ordered his deportation on the ground that his staying would not be 'conducive to the public good'. The Divisional Court also rejected Breslov's application to have the deportation order revoked. Another immigrant, Samuel Venikov was ordered to be deported and refused to be given a hearing. The court rejected his argument because the Home Secretary had made an administrative and not a judicial decision and therefore Venikov was not obliged to be given a hearing.[94]

The nationalist fervour and xenophobia present at the end of the First World War that had contributed to the passing of the 1919 Aliens Act was strongly present during the early 1920s. This atmosphere was evident, for example, in the parliamentary debate of 1923 during which Conservative spokesmen stressed the need for a strict control over alien immigrants. The Jewish dimension, though not being the only focus of attention, had an important part in the discussions. As earlier, the continuing concern about Jewish Bolshevism was very much present. [95]

Significantly, the attitude of the Labour Party towards immigration had also gone through an important change. The earlier anti-restrictionist attitude, clearly still present

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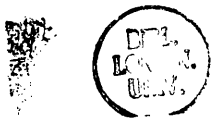
93 ibid.p. 37; Evans 1983, p. 12, 23.

94 The Times 11.4.1922: R v. Governor of Brixton prison and another-Ex parte Bressloff; Nicol, Andrew. Illegal Entrants. Runnymede Trust 1981, pp. 12-13; Gordon 1985, pp. 9-10.

95 Holmes 1988, p. 140.



at the time of the passing of the 1919 Act changed during the few months of Labour Government in 1924. This 'change of attitude' was clearly influenced by the anti-alien public opinion and by the desire of the Labour to stay in power. In early 1924 the general opposition to their anti-restrictionist attitudes frightened the Labour government into operating the legislation against aliens even more firmly than their predecessors had done.

Despite this, the aliens issue was used ruthlessly by the Tory Party in the 1924 General Election with accusations of the Labour Party's sympathy towards aliens. The campaign featured a 'Red Scare' and allegations of foreign subversion similar to the spy-mania of the 1910s. Stanley Baldwin, the Tory Party leader, pointed out that Britain could not afford to tolerate 'revolutionary agitation' and promised to 'examine the laws and regulations as to entry of aliens into this country' [96].

This ruthless use of the aliens' issue in their campaign worked for the Tories. The Conservative victory brought Sir William Joynson-Hicks into office as a new Home Secretary. He was one of the key figures of the continuity of the anti-alienism from before the First World War through to the end of the 1920s. During his time, the lives of aliens, especially Jews, were fraught with insecurity. Non-British born Jews, even if they were naturalised, and their children, were denied employment in the civil service and local government. In London they were also barred from council housing and scholarships. This coincided with the death of the Liberal party as the main opposition and there was a clear tendency among Jews towards the Labour Party between the wars[97]. In 1927 Joynson-Hicks tried to make the Aliens Act permanent, but the proposal was dropped because of the pressure of business and died with the election of a Labour Government in 1929. [98]

The Labour administration proved more sympathetic to the plight of aliens and agreed to set up an appeals procedure for aliens subject to a deportation order. Nevertheless

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[96] Cesarani. 'An Alien Concept', p. 40. In Cesarani & Kushner (eds) 1993.

[97] Alderman, Geoffrey. The Jewish Community in British Politics. Oxford 1983, pp. 104-05.

[98] Cesarani. 'An Alien Concept', pp. 40-41. In Cesarani & Kushner (eds.) 1993; Foot 1965, pp. 111-12.

'the right of asylum', had been buried also by the Labour Government. A notable demonstration of this was the refusal of the Labour Home Secretary, John Clynes, to grant political asylum to Leon Trotskii. The essentials of the 1919 Act also remained in place. One important reason was that its principles had by now become a standard Home Office view, regardless of the party. [99]

2.3. International Comparisons

The first immigration laws of Britain, especially the 1905 Act, were largely influenced by foreign immigration laws. The Royal Commission of 1903 was given the task to 'inquire and report upon the measures adopted for the restriction and control of Alien Immigration in foreign countries' and use them as an example for measures to be taken in Britain. The recommendations of the Commission followed the example of some existing immigration laws, especially the United States and Canada. The Commission was particularly impressed with their ability to prohibit specific classes of aliens. [100]

From 1798 to 1875 there were no Federal laws in the United States dealing with the immigration. However, as in Britain, in the second half of the 19th century, opposition to aliens grew. The complaints were similar to those in Britain, mainly the destitute state of the aliens on arrival and their tendency to crime and disease. The laws passed from 1875 onwards were specifically directed against defined classes on aliens. In 1875 the law was passed against prostitutes and criminals and, in 1882, against lunatics and those liable to become chargeable to public funds. In 1885 came an enactment prohibiting the immigration of any alien who had entered into a contract to perform labour or service of any kind in the United States, with certain exceptions. Further legislation followed in 1887, 1888 and 1891.

The act of 1891 provided that 'all persons likely to become a public charge, persons suffering from a dangerous contagious disease, persons who have been convicted of a

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[99] Cesarani. 'An Alien Concept', p. 41. In Cesarani & Kushner (eds) 1993; Foot 1965, p. 112-13.
[100] Bevan 1986, pp. 69-70.

felony or other infamous crime and also any person whose ticket is paid for with money of another, or who is assisted by others to come', could be prohibited from landing. Penalties were also imposed upon persons who did not follow these regulations and all aliens belonging to the prohibited classes or who had become a public charge were made liable to deportation. An officer, the Superintendent of Immigration, was appointed with a staff of clerks and inspection officers, whose duty was to board and inspect all vessels carrying immigrants. All decisions made by them, touching the right of any alien to land, were final, unless an appeal was taken to the Superintendent, whose action was subject to the review by the Secretary to the Treasury. [101]

The Act of 1903 further extended the classes of prohibited aliens by adding 'epileptics, persons who have been insane within five years, professional beggars, anarchists and contract labourers who had been deported within five previous years'. Some changes were made in procedure. If the officer whose duty it was to examine the aliens on landing decided in favour of the admission of any alien, any other immigration officer could challenge his decision and bring the alien before a Board of Special Enquiry. It became their task to decide whether an alien should be allowed to land or be deported. Also, both the alien and any member of the Board dissenting from the decision, had the right to appeal to the Secretary to the Treasury, whose decision was final.[102] The battery of restrictions that had started in 1882 and was mainly directed against immigrants from southern and eastern Europe reached its culmination in the 1924 Johnson-Reed Act. This Act related future immigration quotas to national origin and to the numbers present in 1890 census. [103]

The Immigration Act of 1905 in Britain was clearly most strongly influenced by the existing immigration laws in the United States. The 1903 Act was actually almost a ready model for it, the main aims of it being qualitative control of designated aliens, and therefore most of the excludable categories in the United States law were encompassed

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[101] Reports of the Commissioners. Royal Commission on Alien Immigration, 1903, Cd 1741, Vol. IX, Part II, p.32.
[102] ibid., p. 33.
[103] Holmes 1991, p. 107.

in the United Kingdom legislation.[104] However, it can be stated that despite restrictive legislation, the United States legislation was still quite favourable to refugees, even if no special privileges were prescribed in the law for refugees from persecution. There were not, for example, any restrictions as to their employment in industry, trade or the professions.

It is true that the immigration laws passed in Britain in the early 20th century were more favourable than most continental laws, so that aliens in Britain were admitted to several of the liberal professions, such as doctors, dentists, barristers and architects, and aliens could qualify on the same terms as British subjects. On the other hand, for example, the Aliens Order of 1920 ordered that the alien had to produce a written permit from the Ministry of Labour in order to be able to enter employment. [105] Since the permits were issued very scarcely, the authorities clearly had effective means for restricting the employment of aliens.

Canadian legislation also made an impression on the 1903 Royal Commission. The principal provisions of the 1886 Immigration Act and the 1902 Amending Act were that no vessel bringing immigrants was admitted to entry unless she had been visited by an immigration agent. The master of every vessel was also required to hand to the Collector of Customs at the port of landing a report, giving full particulars of the passengers, specifying in each case the port of embarkation, the name, sex and age of each passenger, the number of each family, and the profession, occupation and nationality of each passenger. The governor-general could prohibit the landing of any immigrant suffering from any dangerous or infectious disease and any criminal alien. He could also prohibit the landing of destitute immigrants, until the master of the vessel in which they arrived, had paid to an Immigration Agent a sum of money necessary for their temporary support and transport to their place of destination.[106]

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104 Bevan 1986, p. 70.

105 Bentwich, Norman. The Legal Status of Refugees, pp. 3-5 and 13. Refugee Survey 1937-38. Special reports, Vol. V. Refugees and the Law (1). The Royal Institute of International Affairs.

106 Reports of Commissioners. Royal Commission of Alien Immigration; 1903, Cd 1741, Vol. IX, Part II, p. 36.

In Europe there were clear differences between different countries in existing immigration legislation at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century. Germany shared a common history with Britain in immigration; it was a country of emigration until 1885 [107]. The enquiry of the Royal Commission of 1903 about the existing laws in Germany brought out information that in most of the states on the frontiers of the empire there were no special regulations for the admission of aliens. The law of 1867 regulating the passport system provided that foreigners were not required to carry papers of identity either on entering or leaving. Only if the security of the empire or a single state was threatened by the means of war or equivalent danger, the Imperial authority could require passports. In Prussia there were some stricter regulations for the immigrants. The decree from 1896 directed local authorities to keep lists of foreigners residing within their district and that 'this will render it possible to remove any undesirable elements immediately on their arrival, before they have established themselves permanently'. In Bavaria foreigners were required to produce evidence of their nationality and they could also be expelled for specific periods. The Ministry of State had power to refuse admission into the Kingdom to foreigners and to expel them in the interest of public necessity. [108]

The state intervention in the shape of the immigration control in Germany was a result of 'a concern for the preservation of the German national character'. Manpower shortages that could not be met by the indigenous population occurred mainly in the eastern provinces of Prussia in the 1870s. At first compensation was found through the employment of Poles from Russia and Austria, but this policy soon caused a severe political problem. The Government of Prussia had been enforcing a rigid policy of Germanisation on the Poles living in the previously Polish areas annexed by Prussia. The government feared that the employment of 'foreign' Poles would jeopardise this policy, and reacted by ordering mass expulsions and the closing of borders. The big landowners and mine owners reacted strongly against this policy, and therefore it was settled by a compromise. In 1890 the Prussian government suspended the immigration

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[107] Hammar 1985, p. 165.

[108] Reports of Commissioners. Royal Commission of Alien Immigration; 1903, Cd 1741, Vol. IX, Part II, pp. 28-29.

ban on foreign Poles for three years and their further entry, as well as their status as seasonal workers, was authorised in 1894. Continued economic development gradually pushed back political opposition and immigration restrictions were relaxed. However, despite a loosening in restrictions on employment, the general controls over the residence of Polish workers were retained. By 1907 a system of identity cards had also been instituted especially to control this immigrant group. [109]

The First World War brought about a drastic change in the policy towards the Polish workers. In a reversal of the earlier policies Poles were forbidden even to return home. On the day the war broke out passports were made compulsory to prevent them leaving the country. During the war foreign Poles were no longer prohibited from working in the industries of the western provinces, and new Poles were recruited after the occupation of the Russian part of Poland. About 700,000 Poles were 'recruited' by the fashion that as soon as they crossed the German border, they lost their right to return or change jobs. Beside the Poles, a large number of Hungarians and Belgians were forced to work in the German war economy. After the war the policy was reversed. With the breakdown of the German Empire and subsequent economic problems there was no significant employment of foreign labour. [110] The policy of the German authorities towards the admission of immigrants, however, remained quite liberal in the aftermath of the war and entry visas were relatively easy to obtain from the government.[111]

In France, as in Switzerland, according to mid-19th century legislation permission was required to establish domicile and this permission could also be withdrawn by administrative order at any time before naturalisation. The Minister of Interior had more general powers to order an immigrant travelling or resident in France to leave French territory immediately, and to have him taken to the frontiers.[112] However, immigration was not considered to be a problem in France in the 19th century and for the most part of the 20th century. France had a tradition of immigration since the second half of the

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[109] Holmes 1991, p. 106; Hammar (ed.) 1985, pp. 166-67.

[110] Hammar (ed.) 1985, pp. 167-68.

[111] Williams 1972, p. 112.

[112] Reports of Commissioners. Royal Commission of Alien Immgration; 1903, Cd 1741, Vol. IX, Part II, p. 30.

19th century, when thousands of foreigners were granted admission in an effort to compensate for the country's insufficient labour supply and low birth-rate. The low birth-rate created a permanent demographic need and together with periodic labour shortages it served to encourage immigration. The aim of the immigration policy was to regulate the arrival and departure of the foreigners according to the interest of the moment. The problem was that immigration did not always follow the course of the plan and therefore the results were different from the aims of the immigration policy. [113]

During the late 19th century, at a time of industrialisation and urbanisation immigrants came to take places left by the native French who moved to the cities. Between 1850 and 1913 the immigrant population increased from 380,000 to 1,600,000. This was made easier by the fact that before the World War I there existed no special restrictions on the entry of aliens in France. During the war a decree was issued which described that aliens staying more than two months had to obtain a *carte d' identite* in order to regularise their residence in the country. The number of French casualties in the First World War totalled 2 to 3 million. This led to a need for extra labour in order to compensate for the losses of war. As a consequence immigration was encouraged during the period of 1919 to 1921 but the increase in the numbers was still quite small. Between 1922 and 1931, as a consequence of economic growth and shortage of manpower, there was, however, a more significant increase in immigrant population. The numbers increased from 1,532,000 in 1921 to 2,715,000 in 1931. [114]

2.4. Concluding Remarks: The Free Haven of Britain?

The beginning of the 20th century witnessed an end to the Liberal procedures of Victorian Britain as regards to immigration controls. During the 19th century Britain was widely perceived as a centre of liberal refuge, which offered shelter to various groups of immigrants and refugees from other countries. The prolonged economic

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[113] Hammar (ed.). 1985, p. 127.

[114] Bentwich, pp. 6-7. Refugee Survey 1937-38, Vol. V. Refugees and the Law (1); Hammar (ed.) 1985, pp. 27-28.

depression from the late 19th century, however, brought a change to these attitudes, and people started to talk about the need for 'protection'. These feelings were strengthened by the arrival of a large number of Jewish refugees from the Russian Empire from the1880s onwards who became vulnerable targets of anti-alien feelings of the British public and politicians, especially supporters of the Conservative Party.

The passing of the first immigration legislation, the Aliens Act of 1905, was an important landmark in the decline of liberal immigration procedures and the process was further strengthened by the passing of subsequent legislation, the Aliens Restriction Acts of 1914 and 1919, and the Aliens Order of 1920. These provided the Home Secretary and immigration officers with wide powers over the entry, deportation and employment of aliens. Importantly, unlike the Aliens Act of 1905, none of the subsequent immigration legislation contained a statutory recognition of the right of asylum for political refugees. At the time of the passing of the 1919 Act this was justified by assurances from the Home Secretary that any 'respectable political refugee' would be admitted, even if there was no special provision for this in the law.

The last point becomes particularly interesting when considering the policy of the British government towards the Russian refugees from the Bolshevik regime in the aftermath of the Russian Civil War. As it will be pointed out in Chapter 4, the 'principle of the right of asylum' was not to be followed in the case of Russian refugees. Thus, the changed atmosphere in Britain as regards immigration was to manifest itself also in the British government's policy towards Russian refugees.

CHAPTER 3: THE EXODUS FROM RUSSIA FOLLOWING THE CIVIL WAR

3.1. British Involvement in the Civil War

Of all the foreign governments, the British government became the one most heavily involved in the Russian Civil War, both directly, by using its own military forces and indirectly, by providing material assistance and advice. The French clearly were more outspoken in their hostility to Bolshevism, however, at a practical level their actions were not as clearly formulated. Of the other Allied governments, the United States was a reluctant participant, while the Japanese actually only threatened the extent of the territory it ruled, i.e. Far East. [1]

The British (and the Allied) involvement in a Russian Civil War can be understood through two important questions, the First World War and the Bolshevik Revolution. These two events largely determined the British policies in relation to Russia and the new Bolshevik regime. They are also very closely related. The Allies were naturally concerned at the possibility of the Revolution being the spark that could ignite the fires of revolution in other countries. However, the more direct outcome was the fact that the new rulers of Russia aimed at making a separate peace with Germany, and thereby to withdraw their support for the Allies in the war against Germany. This was the scenario that worried the Allies most; after all Russia's role in the eastern front against Germany was of great strategic importance.[2]

A related problem was the fear of the Allied leaders that Germany might take advantage of Russia's disorganised state to establish German domination in Russia.[3] Although this was a fear common to all the Allied leaders, it affected Britain most as it had the most developed trade ties within Russia that could be disrupted by Germany. This was especially so in the Baltic provinces and the oil fields of the Caucasus, both areas of

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[1] Ullman, Richard H. Anglo-Soviet Relations, 1917-1921. Volume II: Britain and the Russian Civil War, November 1918- February 1920. London; Princeton, New Jersey 1968, p. 8.

[2] Haigh, R. H, Morris, D.S and Peters, A.R. Unhappy Landings: British Soviet Relations, the Russian Civil War and Interventionism, 1917-1920. Sheffield 1980, pp. 1-7.

[3] Thompson, John M. Russia, Bolshevism and the Versailles Peace. Princeton, New Jersey 1966, p. 10.

major importance of British investors that wanted to be safeguarded from Germany's 'aggressive' commercial penetration.[4]

The Treaty of Brest -Litovsk thus provided the Allies with varied reasons with which to intervene in Russian affairs. However, the British, and more generally the Allied, attitude towards different fractions in Russia was far from united and logical. Between late February and early May 1918, for example, when the Bolsheviks themselves manifested pro-war opinions, the British tried actively to bring about co-operation with the Bolsheviks. Thereafter, the Allies favoured action against the Bolsheviks, but at first action organised by Russian democrats like N.V. Chaikovskii, not the White generals. [5]

By September 1918 there actually were two socialist states in Russia, that of Lenin and the Bolsheviks in Moscow and that of the SR-dominated Directory formed at Ufa. The latter included the northern territory around Archangel. The main difference between them was that the Ufa administration had a more tolerant attitude to free trade and private enterprise and the local democracy was exercised through regionally based councils rather than workplace soviets. [6]

On 15 February 1918, Bruce Lockhart, the British government's agent in Russia, had his first interview with Trotsky who had just arrived from Brest- Litovsk. For his own part, Lockhart explained his government's willingness to reach a *modus vivendi* with the Bolshevik regime. Trotsky expressed his policy towards Germany to be 'no war- no peace' which he had announced at Brest-Litovsk and also expressed his willingness for co-operation with Britain but only if the Allies would cease their support of the counter-revolution. Lockhart then came away from this meeting convinced that Trotskii had offered a basis for a successful policy on Russia. [7] Lockhart was by no means the only one to advocate a *detente* with the Bolsheviks in February. General Poole, soon to become to be in charge of British military forces in North Russia, was also convinced

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[4] The Russian Outlook, No. 1, vol. 1, 10 May 1919, p. 11; Ullman 1968, p. 8.

[5] Swain, Geoffrey. The Origins of the Russian Civil War. London; New York 1996, pp. 10-11; Ullman 1968, p. 9.

[6] Swain 1996, pp. 11-12.

[7] Ullman, Richard H. Anglo-Soviet relations, 1917-1921. Volume I: Intervention and the War. London; Princeton, New Jersey, 1961, pp. 72-73.

that if the Allies recognised the Bolsheviks they would turn anti-German and join the Allies.[8]

Balfour, the Foreign Secretary, although repeating that the internal affairs were not a concern of the British, stated that Trotskii's proposal would require Britain to abandon her allies in those parts of Russia where Bolshevism could not be regarded as *de facto* government. According to him Britain could never do this. [9] With the ratification of Treaty of Brest-Litovsk between Soviet Russia and Germany, Britain's Russian policy changed quite radically. The other Russia: Siberia, North Russia, the Cossack territories, the Caucasus and Transcaspia began to be looked at as sectors where resistance could be organised against the Bolshevik authorities but even more importantly against the Central Powers. [10] The final end to co-operation with the Bolsheviks, however, came only in May, when it became clear that the Lenin did not intend to annul the Treaty of the Brest-Litovsk, and agreed to make further economic concessions to Germany.[11]

Already before this, however, there had been a military incident that greatly influenced the relationship between the British and the Soviet government. This happened on 6 March when a company of British marines landed at the North Russian port of Murmansk. Even though they had Bolshevik permission, their presence was considered very dangerous and there was a fear that the British would soon land in greater force not only at Murmansk but also at Archangel. Thus Lockhart's efforts to persuade the Bolsheviks not to sign the treaty were virtually doomed from the start. The view of the Bolsheviks was that the ratification of the peace with Germany would bring at least temporary relief.[12]

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[8] Bradley, John. Allied Intervention in Russia. University Press of America 1968, p. 19.
[9] Ullman 1961, pp. 74-75.
[10] ibid., p. 83.
[11] Swain 1996, p. 7.
[12] Ullman 1961, pp. 109-120.

In April 1918 a second body of 150 British marines landed at Murmansk. This was followed at the end of May by another 370 marines.[13] They had been asked to come by the Murmansk Soviet to help them against the White Finnish offensive. The presence of Allied forces in North Russia was naturally a big source of concern to the Germans. A telegram from Chicherin to the Murmansk Soviet on 15 June demanded the immediate departure of British, French and American warships from Russian ports. However, on 23 June a reinforcement of 600 men under the command of General Maynard was brought to Murmansk. This agreement between the Allied forces and the Murmansk leaders meant a complete break between the Murmansk Soviet and Moscow.[14] By this time Soviet-Allied relations were passing from distrust to open hostility. [15] Because the German government had informed the Bolsheviks that they had no intention to continue their military operations in Russia, the Allies had lost their last chance of securing the consent of the Bolsheviks for intervention. In these circumstances, Lockhart told Balfour in his telegram, the only policy left to the Allies was to prepare, quickly and secretly, to intervene on the largest possible scale.[16]

The plan for combined Northern and Siberian intervention came to be the basis of the British military policy in Russia. However, in May 1918, because of the American opposition to the Siberian part of it, the British government decided to press for a decision on the North Russian phase. In June 1918 the Supreme War Council approved the Allied military effort to retain control of Murmansk and, if possible, Archangel. General Poole was chosen as a commander of both the land and naval defence.[17] North Russia, even though it was a side-show in the actual Civil War, was considered of a great importance by the British, especially since there was thought to be a large amounts of military stores at Archangel which might fall into German or White Finn hands.

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[13] Haigh et al. 1980, p. 15.

[14] Ullman 1961, pp. 175-185.

[15] Mawdsley, Evan. The Russian Civil War. London; Boston 1987, p. 50.

[16] Ullman 1961, pp. 185-87.

[17] Ullman 1961, pp. 194-95.

Murmansk and Archangel were also the ports that were most accessible for the British and the Bolsheviks had neither the political support nor administrative capacity in the north. The Murmansk Soviet had decided to continue the co-operation with the Allies against the Moscow decisions, and Archangel, on its part, was already in anti-Bolshevik hands when Maynard's troops arrived on 23 June. [18] At the head of the Archangel government, the URR directorate, was N.V. Chaikovskii. The URR, Union for the Regeneration of Russia had been set up in April 1918 by right-wing Social-Revolutionaries, Popular Socialists like Chaikovskii and left-leaning Kadets. For the Allies these green patriotic socialists in North Russia offered at the time the only hope for establishing the Eastern Front. [19]

During 1918 some serious problems arose between the directorate and its army. The attempted coup by the Russian army commander, Chaplin, was met with strong opposition from the British, and the democratic government was ordered to be restored.[20] Chaikovskii was not, however, ready for compromises demanded by Chaplin and on September 12 he dissolved all the departments and resigned.

The final defeat of the URR was not far away. Although the Ufa State Conference had resolved the differences within the Green camp and established a five-man Directory as the executive arm of the Provisional All-Russian Government based in Omsk [21], in less than two months it was to share the fate of Chaikovskii's government in Archangel. On 18 November 1918 the Directorate was overthrown by Admiral Kolchak, the White veteran of one of the earliest attempts at counter-revolution in the summer of 1917.[22] As the British took the pragmatic decision to continue to aid Kolchak and other White generals, some members of the URR swallowed hard and joined Kolchak. Others quietly emigrated or joined the Bolsheviks in the common struggle against the White generals and thus sank their differences with the Bolsheviks until the victory from the

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[18] Mawdsley 1987, pp. 49-50.
[19] Swain 1996, pp. 155-156.
[20] Swain 1996, pp. 210-13.
[21] Figes, Orlando. A People's Tragedy. The Russian Revolution 1891-1924. London 1996, p. 585.
[22] Swain 1996, pp. 213- 219.

Whites had been achieved. However, many leaders of the Right SR's were also imprisoned by Kolchak and later escorted to the Chinese border. [23]

The British Cabinet considered a plethora of papers on British involvement in Russia during October and November of 1918. Lockhart argued that Britain should have a firm and clear approach to the Russian situation, in that it must totally oppose the Bolshevik regime or accept it 'warts and all'. A middle course between them, by giving the anti-Bolsheviks financial and material aid, would only prolong the Civil War without changing its eventual outcome. Ironically, this was exactly what Britain had chosen to do in Russia. Sir Henry Wilson recommended that all possible aid would be given to the anti-Bolshevik forces in the North and South of Russia to give them opportunity of defeating their enemies. However, he also concluded: ' If the Bolsheviks are the better men, we cannot indefinitely continue to protect the others'[24].

Balfour insisted that British government had not decided to support or oppose a particular political system in Russia. However, Britain could not abdicate all its obligations, for example towards anti-Bolshevik administrations that had grown up under the shelter of Allied forces. He considered that the British government was bound by the 'obligations of honour' to assist those Russians who had remained loyal to the Allied cause. This argument was repeatedly put forward during the whole period of British involvement in Russia.[25] After the Armistice with Germany in November 1918 it became harder and harder for Allies to justify their interference in Russia.[26] Therefore the argument of obligations of honour was especially useful as a justification for intervention.

At the meeting on 13 November at the Foreign Office the first specific decisions regarding British policy in Russia for the period following the Armistice were made. It was decided to remain in occupation in North Russia, to establish contact with General

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[23] Swain 1996, pp. 11-12, 253-54; Figes 1996, p. 587.

[24] cited in Ullman 1968, p. 13.

[25] Haigh et al. 1980,pp. 9-12; Ullman 1968, pp. 12-16.

[26] Luckett, Richard. The White Generals. An Account of the White Movement and the Russian Civil War. Edinburgh 1971, p. 205.

Denikin and give him all possible assistance in military material and to supply the Baltic states with military materials after their governments could give evidence that they would be able to make effective use of such support. [27] This does not imply that there was a unified consensus inside the government on the lines of Russian policy. The statements of the government were often quite conflicting. Not least were those of the Prime Minister, Lloyd George, which varied from the statements that Britain would be leading the intervention in Russia to statements strongly against intervention.[28]

Lloyd George's position soon hardened against intervention whilst Winston Churchill, then Secretary of State for War advocated a more robust intervention against the Bolsheviks. At the meeting of the Imperial War Cabinet on 30 and 31 December 1918, Churchill argued strongly for collective intervention against the Soviet regime. Lloyd George gave some facts about the size of the Red army compared to that of the Allied forces and asked where the necessary troops would be found. British troops were not willing to be involved, neither were probably other troops. Thus, Lloyd George became 'definitely opposed to military intervention in any shape '. [29]

Even though the Prime Minister, not to mention the British Labour Party were becoming more anti-interventionist in their views, the British policy in Russia remained unchanged until the spring of 1919. British involvement remained greatest in North Russia for the whole period. It was the only place where British took part in combat operations (and also civil administration), with local Russian forces serving only to augment their efforts. In June 1919 there were about 13,300 British involved in Archangel, about 8,000 of them in the Relief Force. In comparison, there were only 118 French left (originally there were about 2,500 French troops) and about 300 Poles. In Murmansk there were about 5,000 British troops and 710 Americans, (though the American troops mostly withdrew by May 1919) [30], 1,500 French, 1,900 Italians and 1,000 Serbians. Altogether, these made about 23,500 men in Archangel and

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[27] Ullman 1968, pp. 13-14.

[28] Haigh et al 1980, p. 27.

[29] Ullman 1968, pp. 95-97.

[30] Strakhovsky, Leonid. Intervention at Archangel. The Story of Allied Intervention and Russian Counter-revolution in North Russia, 1918-1920. Princeton 1944, p. 193.

Murmansk.[31] As a head of the White government in Archangel was General K.E. Miller, with whom the British started to co-operate after the fall of Chaikovskii's directorate. [32]

It was also in Archangel where one of the severest conflicts in relation to the British involvement arose. The incident involved the British Consul in Archangel, Douglas Young. He protested strongly against the British offensive against the Bolsheviks in Archangel and as a result he was forced to resign from the Diplomatic Service on 9 October 1919. [33] In his memorandum Young pointed out that during April and May of 1918 his position was a British representative at Murmansk and Archangel instructed by HMG to give the local Soviet authorities an assurance that HMG had not and never had had any intention of interfering in the internal affairs of Russia. By mid-August he was confirmed in his belief that the British intervention had been based upon false assumptions, e.g. first, that the Bolsheviks were pro-German and second, that the Russian Whites were anti-German and anxious to continue the war. Young had accused the Foreign Office of preventing his information from reaching the Secretary of the State, to whom he was responsible. [34]

In Siberia, Allied intervention took a different form from that in the North. The total number of the Allied troops was much larger with 60,000 Czechs, 70,000 Japanese, nearly 9,000 Americans and more than 4,000 Canadians. British were, however, only a force of about 2,000. Also, with the exception of the Czechs, none of the foreign forces ever engaged in actual fighting against the Bolsheviks. Their role was almost entirely restricted to training and supplying White Russian troops and to guarding the towns and lines of communication behind the zone of operations. The mission of Major-General Alfred W.F. Knox, the senior military official in Siberia, was entrusted with the task of training Russian troops and a training school for Russian officers was established in the bay of Vladivostok. This restricted role, however, did not satisfy Knox, whose clear

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31 War Office (WO) 106/1177. Public Record Office (PRO).

32 Figes 1996, p. 652.

33 Rothstein, Andrew. When Britain Invaded Soviet Russia. The Consul Who Rebelled. London 1979, p. 110.

34 Memorandum by Douglas Young. Douglas Young Papers, Add. 61848. British Library. Department of Manuscripts.

wish was to make crusade against Bolshevism. Acting on his own authority, he allowed Lieutenant-Colonel John Ward and his detachment to go to the front. The War Office, however, carefully pointed out that unless specific orders came to the contrary, no further British troops were to go west of Urals. [35]

Kolchak's coup in November 1918 was met by a warm approval of British military authorities in Siberia, especially by Major Knox. He had met Kolchak in the summer of 1918 and in the lengthy conversations in Japan they had come to a conclusion that the only form of government that could save Russia was a military government. Knox was clearly impressed with Kolchak which could be seen in his message to the War Office in August 1918, stating that he considered Kolchak the best Russian for British purposes in the east. It seems that Knox also influenced the decision of Kolchak to accept the title of Supreme Ruler of Russia after the coup in Omsk [36], a position which was recognised by other White generals.

The reactions were not quite as warm in London. Nevertheless, Balfour almost sent a telegram to Kolchak with a message of British government's support for his government. After second thoughts a very urgent telegram went out to Eliot, the British High Commissioner in Siberia, with a message : 'Please suspend action in regard to message for the present '.[37] As it will be noticed, this provides an example of the ambivalent attitude of the British government towards Kolchak during the whole period of intervention.

Sir Bernard Pares, British representative in Siberia, did his best to maintain a good relationship between British and Siberian governments. His attitude was clearly anti-Bolshevik which can be seen in various reports, memoranda and newspaper articles.[38] He also worked hard for the British co-operation in the work of Russian Reconstruction in Omsk. The initiative of the co-operation was partly due to the personal interest of

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[35] Ullman 1968, pp. 28-32.

[36] Figes 1996, p. 587.

[37] Ullman 1968, pp. 32-42; Smele, Jonathan D. Civil War in Siberia. The anti-Bolshevik government of Admiral Kolchak 1918-1920. Cambridge 1996, pp. 74-75.

[38] The good examples are for example his report on Bolshevist atrocities and his article in The Times, 15 December 1919. Pares collection, PAR/6/5. SSEES.

Pares and partly the interest of several Anglo-Russian institutions of which he was a member. These attempts were also supported by various Russian émigré scholars in Britain, for example Sir Paul Vinogradov. The whole issue was naturally a quite sensitive one, and Pares carefully made clear in his memorandum that this policy was more a matter of voluntary initiative and not a direct responsibility of the British government. [39]

Nevertheless, there is no doubt that the project of Russian reconstruction had also official support. The idea of intervening in Russia by cultivating patriotic socialist groups had arisen during 1917 and this strategy dominated the British thinking until November 1918.[40] The changes in the political situation in Russia brought these policies to an end in relation to the patriotic socialist groups, but the plans for Russian reconstruction were continued with the White government in Omsk through the efforts of Pares and others.

In his letter to the Acting Foreign Minister in Omsk, Mr. Soukine, Pares laid out ideas on British assistance to Russia. He pointed out that the most obvious general directions of such help were the preparation of British persons for posts in Russian service and the similar preparation of Russians for the same work. According to Pares the work of social reconstruction, especially that of training of social workers was among the most urgent needs and that need had further increased because of the 'sheer destruction conducted by the Bolsheviks'. Pares continued that it was generally recognised in Britain that the first interest of Britain in Russia was that Russia herself should be strong and self-supporting. For this reason there could not be any monopoly of British effort. However, it had long been realised in Britain that the task of social reconstruction had sooner or later to engage all energies in Russia, and that there were 'few tasks which were more likely to be attractive to young and public-spirited Englishmen than a share in the work of building up a new and free Russia'. The

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[39] Pares collection, PAR/6/11/2. Memorandum on British co-operation in the work of Russian reconstruction, Omsk, 1919. SSEES.

[40] Swain 1996, p. 103.

government of Omsk, on its side, welcomed the 'noble intention manifested in Britain to assist Russia in her cultural and educational reconstruction'. [41]

In the same letter Pares also described the existing machinery for the co-ordination of this work in Britain. Among these were the Central Russian Committee (CRC) of Sir George Buchanan, which was connected with the Foreign Office; The Russo-British Chamber of Commerce; The British Russia Club, which was also presided by Sir George Buchanan; The United Russia Societies Association, and the various University schools of Russian study, particularly the School of Slavonic Studies at the London University. He pointed out that it would be desirable that some organ of co-ordination should also exist in Siberia.[42] The idea of the creation of the special service of the Foreign Office for Russia had been initiated by Pares in 1918. His proposal was to create a special and independent committee, with a status of a department of the Foreign Office, which would act as an Intelligence Bureau on Russia and to draft and submit proposals relating to Russia.[43] Pares's proposal was approved by the Inter-Departmental Committee of the Board of Trade and the Central Russian Committee was officially established with an expenditure of £9,850 for its execution .[44]

The Central Russian Committee also took part in a project for the tabulation of Russians in Britain in 1918 with the purpose of 'service, relief and information of a confidential character for the use of all departments having relation to Russian affairs'. The project was undertaken by Mr. L.G. Gall, the Secretary of the Central Russian Committee, at the request of Pares. Its aim was to gather information on the Russians in Britain who might be of use for the service of the Allies, as well as general information for educational, employment and relief purposes. British daily papers assisted on their part by inviting Russians with technical knowledge or general educational qualifications to register at the Consulate. This method did not, however, achieve a great deal of success.

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[41] Pares collection, PAR/6/7/3 and 6/15/2. Pares's letter to Soukine 'British co-operation in the work of Russian reconstruction', 30.5.1919 and Soukine's reply to Sir Bernard Pares, 21.6.1919. SSEES.

[42] Pares collection, PAR/6/7/3. Pares to Soukine 30.3.1919. SSEES.

[43] Pares collection, PAR/6/4/3. ' On the question of a Russian department: suggestions', May 1918. SSEES.

[44] Pares collection, PAR/6/4/1. SSEES.

Pares pointed out that although the majority of Russians in Britain were unskilled workers and artisans, it would be nevertheless possible that some five thousand Russians could come within the scope of the tabulation, having specialist knowledge or skills, which could be useful for the Allies. There is no further information on the success of the project, except that the Central Russian Committee did not provide any funds or staff for the use of Mr. Gall. Pares pointed this out in his letter to the Committee and expressed a view that without funds Mr.Gall could not continue to work.[45]

Pares also worked actively in the Educational Committee and in the Russian Relief and Reconstruction Fund. The Educational Committee was a special committee of the Central Russian Committee for the matters of educational needs of Russia. The Committee was involved in the project of getting help from British universities and schools for the Russian ones and in educational propaganda in Russia. Among other things it encouraged British universities and schools to offer free places for the children of distinguished Russians, who had offered valuable services to Britain. [46] The Russian Relief and Reconstruction Fund (RRRF) was originally established for the reconstruction work in Siberia with training of Russian and British personnel. Later it was involved in general relief work in Russia as well in work for the assistance of Russian refugees.[47]

In the south of Russia the scope of British involvement was that of a midway between the North Russia and Siberia. In November 1918, a decision was taken to furnish assistance to the anti-Bolshevik forces in South Russia and the Don region led by General A.I. Denikin. At the same meeting it was decided to reaffirm the British government's adherence to the Anglo-French convention of 23 December 1917, according to which the British were to take charge of the 'Cossack territories', Transcaucasia and Central Asia. The only important military intervention of the British

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[45] Pares collection, PAR/6/4/1. The tabulation of Russians in England. SSEES.

[46] Pares collection, PAR/7/2/3. 'Education for Russian families', recommendations by the Educational Committee; Par/6/4/3. Educational Relief for Russians. SSEES.

[47] Pares collection, PAR/7/3/3. Russian Relief and Reconstruction Fund. SSEES; FO 371/4013, File 63588, Paper N 171782. Statement of RRRF. PRO.

happened in the Crimea on December 1918 when 500 British marines landed at Sevastopol to supervise the evacuation of German forces and to make sure that the remaining vessels of the Russian Black Sea fleet did not fall to the partisan detachments. The marines remained only 25 days after which they were relieved by a much larger French force. Except for this episode, British intervention in South Russia was limited to giving material assistance to Denikin. On the other hand the amount of the material assistance was quite notable.[48]

British forces also came in the Caucasus in large numbers in November 1918. They occupied Baku and the railway between Baku and Batum in order to assure the safety of this important line and also to enforce the terms of the armistice with Turkey. These troops in the Caucasus were actually the largest commitments of British troops in Russia. The nature of the British commitment in the Caucasus was, however, somewhat different from the British involvement elsewhere in Russia. The going of the British forces to the Caucasus happened at the time of the closing moments of the First World War, after only cursory discussions about the reasons and objectives of their role. [49] The involvement of the British troops in the Caucasus, however, grew from the initial task of enforcing the armistice with Turkey to much greater involvement in the affairs of the various 'border states' of Russia in the Caucasus. In this, the British policies were largely guided by the commercial interests of Britain, primarily that of the importance of oil in the area.[50]

The other region where the British became engaged during the months following the Armistice with Germany was the Baltic. The British government had clearly reacted warmly to the independence movements of Baltic countries. In May 1918 it had granted *de facto* recognition to the Estonian constituent assembly until the Peace Conference should take place. In September the Foreign Office sent the Estonian representative in London a note which formally assured that the British government 'would be entirely opposed to any attempts to impose on Estonia a government which would not be in

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[48] Ullman 1968, pp. 44-50

[49] ibid., pp. 50-51.

[50] Ullman 1968, pp. 66-86, 226.

accordance to self-determination'. Similar assurances were sent to the Latvian National Council in November. The Lithuanian case was complicated by Polish claims and the policy of Britain toward Lithuanian developments was a prudent silence. [51]

In the late autumn of 1918 it seemed likely that the Baltic provinces would be settled by the Red Army, which followed on the heels of the withdrawing German troops. At this point the Imperial War Cabinet decided to send five light cruisers, nine destroyers and seven mine-sweepers to the Baltic 'to show the British flag and support British policy as circumstances dictate'. The British naval forces also landed at Riga, though they were forced to leave at the beginning of January in front of advancing Bolsheviks.

The situation in the Baltic was complicated by the presence of different actors in the area: the north-western army of White General Iudenich; German forces under the command of general von der Golts; Allied military mission Under Sir Hubert Gough, whose responsibility was to supervise the withdrawal of von der Goltz's troops and finally, the Soviet troops. Von der Goltz, however, refused to take orders from Gough and began to advance against Estonian and Latvian troops. The Estonian troops managed to beat Goltz's troops but as a consequence of this episode the Estonians cut their support to General Iudenich's army because of the alleged connection between Germans and Iudenich's troops. The complexity of the events in the Baltics had its influence on the British policy in that the government did provide material support to General Iudenich but his assistance was on a much less generous scale than any of the other generals. [52]

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[51] Thompson 1968, p. 56; Ullman 1968, pp. 51-53.

[52] Ullman 1968, pp. 55-58, 254-58.

3.2. From Prinkipo to the Change of Policy

Although the Imperial War Cabinet had not reached an agreement on Russian policy in its meetings during November and December 1918, Lloyd George resolved to proceed himself to attempt to bring about an end to the Civil War in Russia. On 12 January 1919 the question whether Russia should be represented at the Peace Conference was considered at the Paris Peace Conference. The Omsk government had urged that discussion be delayed until their delegates reached Paris. The French Foreign Minister, Pichon was of an opinion that the Omsk delegates should not attend the meeting officially but that their views could still be heard. Lloyd George, on the opposite, stated that the Omsk delegates did not represent the opinion of whole Russia more than the Bolsheviks did, and pointed out that it would give an impression that they represented Russia. As a compromise it was decided that there would be no formal Russian representation at the Peace Conference.

As an alternative, at the meeting of the Council of Ten, 21 January, both Lloyd George and President Wilson put forward a proposal that all the various Russian delegates would confer together elsewhere. This proposal was accepted by the Council of Ten and on 23 January the Allies sent an invitation to all Russian factions to attend the peace conference on the Princes Islands (Prinkipo) in the Sea of Marmora. [53] The attempt, however, failed because all the anti-Bolshevik elements indignantly refused the invitation.[54] There is also no doubt that there were disagreements among the Allied governments on the Prinkipo policy as well, and that the French government was actually strongly opposed to the whole idea of inviting Bolsheviks to Prinkipo. [55]

In any case, the Prinkipo episode clearly revealed the limited understanding of the western leaders of Russian life and politics. It was certainly unrealistic to expect that the different factions in Russia would immediately cease hostilities at a word from the Peace Conference. The reactions of the anti-Bolsheviks were a mixture of incredulity

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53 Kettle 1992, pp. 82-83; Ullman 1968, pp. 99-109.

54 FO 418/53, File 11563, No. 7. PRO; Ullman 1968, p. 113.

55 Kettle 1992, pp. 85-89.

and indignation with amazement and resentfulness that they, friends of the Allies and recipients of the Allied support, should be expected to sit down at the same with the Bolsheviks. It was considered both unbelievable and unthinkable. In a press interview S. Sazonov, the former Foreign Minister in the Tsarist government, denounced the whole concept and said that the invitation itself was unacceptable and insulting.[56]

The White Russians were unanimous that it was only the anti-Bolshevik Russia that should be represented at the Peace Conference. Virtually all the anti-Bolsheviks agreed on the urgency of persuading the Allies to recognise one Russian government. The problem, especially from the Allied point of view was that there was no single all-Russian government, but several separate ones. The Western governments had, however, continued to consider the diplomatic representatives of the Provisional government as the legal representatives of Russia after the Bolshevik Revolution, since none of the Allies recognised the Soviet government.

During 1918 some European ambassadors of the Russian Provisional government had also formed an informal body which met in Paris under aegis of V.A. Maklakov, the Russian Ambassador of the Provisional government, and exchanged information and views on a regular basis. Their initiative was also to form a Russian Political Conference for discussing the Russian interests in peace and the position they should take before the Allies. The aims of the Conference were to secure official admission to the peace talks as the empowered representative of Russia, to promote unification of White Russian governments and to persuade the Allies to send more aid to the anti-Bolshevik movement. It was decided to invite to the Conference representatives of both camps of anti-Bolsheviks; those who represented the old pre-Revolutionary Russia, as well as the representatives of the 'New Russia', i.e. those who accepted the February Revolution of 1917.

In the end Maklakov and his colleagues managed to bring together a remarkably disparate group of Russian political figures to the Conference, ranging from the representatives of Kolchak's Siberian government and Denikin's South Russian

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[56] Thompson 1966, p. 119, 129.

government to Chaikovskii, the former head of North Russian government; other 'democratic' and 'leftist' representatives as well as representatives of the 'old regime'. There were, however, some important names absent from the rolls of the Conference. Among them was Aleksander Kerenskii, who had irritated both the Allies and the Russian diplomats during 1918, so that his participation in the Conference was never even considered. Pavel Miliukov, the leader of the Kadet Party (National Freedom, i.e. Constitutional Democratic Party) and the former Foreign Minister in the Provisional government, did not attend, either, though mainly because of reasons independent of him. The French press raised such a big storm over his alleged collaboration with German forces in the Ukraine that Maklakov made a decision to send him to London. [57]

Absent was also Konstantin Nabokov, Russian Provisional Government's *Chargé d'Affaires* in London [58]. His view was that it was unwise for the Conference to accept anything less than full representation at the peace talks. In London he was, however, persistently urging upon the British the necessity of having Russia represented at the peace talks. After Foreign Minister Balfour's rejection of his arguments, Nabokov concluded that the denial of Russian representation was part of British policy of keeping Russia weak and divided in order to give British imperialism a free hand in the Middle and Far East.[59]

The decision of the Supreme War Council to deny the official representation of the anti-Bolsheviks at the Peace Conference and to hear the émigrés by means of memoranda and private interviews instead was naturally much less than the Political Conference had hoped to achieve. A further and perhaps heavier blow to the anti-Bolshevik Russians was the Prinkipo proposal that followed few days later. [60]

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[57] Thompson 1966, pp. 66-77.

[58] The last official Russian Ambassador in Britain was Count Benckendorff, representing the Tsarist Government. When he died of influenza in January 1917, no successor was appointed either by the Tsarist or the Provisional Government, but the Russian Embassy in London remained in the hands of a Chargé d' Affaires. (Reference: Nicolson, Harold. King George the Fifth: His Life and Reign. London 1952, p. 299.)
Nabokov was appointed as the Russian Chargé d'Affaires by the Russian Provisional Government. Officially he ceased to act as Chargé d' Affaires at the very beginning of 1918, when the British FO informed Nabokov that he could no longer be regarded as the 'representative' of Russia. Unofficially he was nevertheless continued to be regarded as 'Russian representative', and even the title Chargé d' Affaires continue to appear in the FO and HO documents. (Reference: FO 371/10498, File 4285, Paper N 4285. FO Minutes, May 1924. PRO.)

[59] Thompson 1966, pp. 73, 79-80.

[60] Thompson 1966, pp. 80-81.

The existing Russian society in Britain also strongly objected the British plans for negotiations between the Bolsheviks and White forces. They also held a firm opinion that only 'White Russia' should be represented at the Paris Peace Conference. Many members of the colony were well-known figures of the former provisional government and individuals representing other anti-Bolshevik political groupings. To mention a few there were persons such as P. Miliukov, K. Nabokov, S. Poliakov-Litovtsev, editor of the Russian Commonwealth and liberal democrat, I.V. Shklovskii, member of the 'Narodnaia Volia' (People's Will) Party, which subsequently gave birth to the SR and Populist Parties. Shklovkii, however, had settled in England already in 1896. [61]

In February 1919 the Russian Liberation Committee (Union) was established in London with an aim of 'the overthrow the Bolshevism, the restoration of order and the regeneration of Russia'. Among its members of the Committee was for example Ariadna Tyrkova-Williams, a Russian journalist, who had emigrated to Britain in 1918, as well as P.B. Struve, who was also at that point staying in Britain for a short time. [62] The Committee published a *Bulletin* during 1919 and early 1920, as well as several pamphlets relating to situation in Russia. In April 1919, an appeal to the Allies to give help for Denikin and Kolchak in 'their liberation of the whole Russia and restoration of the unity' was made by Leonid Andreiev in the Committee's pamphlet. In the same pamphlet the Prinkipo proposal 'to put loyal Russia on the same moral level with Russia's murderers and hangman' was recognised as 'a terrible blunder'. [63]

The Russian Commonwealth magazine, with Poliakov-Litovtsev as its editor, was published twice monthly from 1918 until early 1920 by the Union of 'Russian Commonwealth'. It represented a liberal view and stated as its aims the establishment of the republican form of government in Russia, not even the 'mild' form of autocracy.[64] At the time of the Prinkipo proposal the editorial of the magazine condemned the peace negotiations between the Bolsheviks and anti-Bolsheviks as

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[61] The Russian Outlook, vol.1, no.1, 10 May 1919, p. 12; Russian Liberation Committee, Pamphlet no. 1. British Library, 8092.dd.9.

[62] H.W. Williams Papers, Add. 54466, Vol. XXXI. British library, department of manuscripts; Kaznina 1997, p. 70.

[63] Russian Liberation Committee, Pamphlet no. 6. British Library, 8092.dd.9.

[64] The Russian Commonwealth, vol. 1, no. 1, 1 November 1918, p. 1.

strongly as the Liberation Committee. It also shared the opinion that the anti-Bolshevik Russia was the only possible representative of Russia at the Peace Conference.[65]

Another Russian paper, *The Russian/ Russkii zhurnal*, which was published in London from late 1918 to August 1919, Edouard S. Liubov as its founder and editor, also expressed its opinion against the Prinkipo invitation. However, the editorial of the paper suggested that the new way of solving the problem would perhaps be to invite representatives of different nationalities; Russians, Ukrainians, Georgians, Jews and so on to the Conference. [66] This clearly suggests a liberal tone of the editor, which more conservative émigrés, those of the opinion of the united and undivided Russia would have probably not shared.

The Russian émigrés in Britain, as in other countries of emigration, represented various political views and anti-Bolshevik fractions. Generally speaking the anti-Bolshevik Russia could be divided in two political groups; that of the old pre-Revolutionary Russia, mainly consisting of monarchists, and the camp of the 'New Russia' which generally accepted the February Revolution of 1917 [67]. The publications mentioned above represented mostly 'New Russia' in their political orientation, supporting the February Revolution of 1917 against the old centralised Russia. The common cause, the overthrow of Bolshevism, however, guaranteed general views on the Russian representation at the Peace Conference, on Prinkipo, as well as support to the White governments in Russia. Therefore, for example, a resolution was passed by the Russian colony in London at the end of 1918. It recognised the necessity of Russia being represented at the Peace Conference as a 'fully authorised' country, and stated that the representatives of the 'United Russia' should be representatives of the White governments of Archangel, Omsk and Ekaterinodar.[68]

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[65] The Russian Commonwealth, vol.1, nos. 5-6, 20 January 1919, pp. 105-6 and no. 7, 5 February 1919, pp. 153-156.

[66] The Russian/Russkii zhurnal, vol. 1, no. 17, 4 February 1919, p. 7.

[67] Thompson 1966, p. 68.

[68] H.W. Williams Papers, Add. 54466, Vol. XXXI, ff. 3-9. Proceedings of the Russian colony in London 14.1.1919 (in Russian). British library, department of manuscripts.

That the common struggle against Bolshevism united different sections can also be seen in the policy of the *Russian Commonwealth*. Even though the editorial of the magazine criticised the manner of the overthrow of the Omsk directorate by Kolchak in November 1918, it was later recognised that 'during such a tragic and fateful time there was no right to make a stand with regard to such a tremendous task as the regeneration of Russian state-power merely on vague feelings'. The paper also stated that a strong hand in a Civil War was necessary, and that it was its duty to 'face the future rather than to brood on the past'. [69]

At the War Cabinet meetings on 12 and 13 February 1919 Churchill again argued for a definite decision to make war against the Bolsheviks by using much larger Allied forces than were at the time in Russia. The principal arguments opposing Churchill came from Lloyd George. Since neither the House of Commons nor Balfour supported Churchill, his proposals failed. The questionnaire of the War Office had indicated of the extent of popular opposition to the use of conscript troops in Russia, and the Cabinet was thus well aware of the unpopularity of the operations in Russia, both with the troops and with the public at home.[70]

An important step towards ending the British involvement in the Russian Civil War was taken on 4 March 1919 when the War Cabinet reached a decision that no additional troops would be sent for the operations in Russia and that British forces would be withdrawn from Murmansk and Archangel 'as soon as the ice melts in the White Sea'.[71] Also another decision was made by the Cabinet, one of a great importance for the Provisional Government of the Northern Region, namely that they would not be informed of the forthcoming withdrawal for the present. This was an action directly contrary to the advice of F.O. Lindley, the British Commissioner in North Russia, whose opinion was that London had a moral obligation to inform the Archangel government. However, according to Earl Curzon, the Acting Foreign Secretary, the

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[69] The Russian Commonwealth, vol. 1, no. 3, 1 December 1918 and nos. 5-6, 20 January, 1919.

[70] Kettle 1992, pp. 111-112; Ullman 1968, pp. 118-135.

[71] Lloyd George papers, F 8/3/29. Winston Churchill to the Prime Minister 8.3.1919. House of Lords Record Office; Ullman 1968, p. 134.

Soviet government would be certain to regard this announcement as a sign that Allied Governments had decided to abandon the White Russian groups. [72]

Winston Churchill was given a broad authority to bring about the evacuation of the British troops but these operations could not actually be described easily as a withdrawal. His plan was to let Ironside, in command of British forces in North Russia after General Poole, join Gaida, the Czech General commanding Kolchak's northern army at Kotlas. Lloyd George agreed to this plan. However, the Czechs were not willing to give help to Kolchak and without their help this junction of anti-Bolshevik forces became a military impossibility. The mutinies among the Russian regiments were the final straw for Ironside and in July he became in favour of a rapid withdrawal. The worst of these mutinies happened on 7 July in Troitsa in the Slavo-British legion, where eight members of the battalion shot nine British and Russian officers. [73]

The evacuation of the British forces began formally on 1 September 1919 and by 27 September the last British troops had left Archangel. On 12 October the evacuation of Murmansk was completed. The British offered General Miller to evacuate his forces to Murmansk which was easier to defend and also more accessible to supplies from England. Miller refused, partly because Kolchak had ordered him to stay in Archangel but also because his men were defending their homes, unlike British soldiers. He requested the British to remain for one more month but this plea was firmly rejected by the British.[74]

The decision of the withdrawal from North Russia, even if it clearly was a sign of changing attitude of the British in relation to their involvement in the Civil War cannot, however, be interpreted as an acknowledgement by the British that the Bolsheviks were going to be victorious. It was more that militarily North Russia was viewed as relatively unimportant, especially compared to South Russia and Siberia.[75] Actually, at the end of

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72 Ullman 1968, pp. 178-179.

73 Allfrey, Maj. E. M. 'Five months with 45th Battalion Royal Fusiliers in North Russia', diary. Imperial War Museum, 86/86/1; Rhodes, Benjamin. The Anglo-American Winter War with Russia, 1918-1919. London; New York 1988, p. 112; Ullman 1968, pp. 183-192.

74 Ullman 1968, pp. 196-98.

75 Ullman 1968, p. 172.

April 1919, the Cabinet had decided that Kolchak should receive continued support, and in addition he should be offered *de jure* recognition as the head of the Provisional government in Siberia. This recommendation was introduced by Lloyd George at the meeting of the Supreme Council in May 1919.[76] The growing Allied interest in the possibility of recognising Kolchak was utilised also by the Russian Political Conference, which at this time had also began to lobby more actively for this. In early April the Conference had sent an emissary to London to press the British politicians for the recognition of Kolchak's government.[77]

The question of recognition was carefully considered in Paris. In late May the Supreme Council sent a despatch to Admiral Kolchak declaring that the Allies were prepared to continue to help Kolchak and other Russian groups to establish themselves as single Russian government. In return of Allied support Kolchak was expected to establish a democratic government in Siberia; that he would permit free local elections and summon the Constituent Assembly. Not surprisingly, especially since he knew that there was no possibility for the Allies to monitor conditions in Omsk, Kolchak replied to the note with a liberal tone.

It is, however, important to notice that in the end the Allies never offered an official recognition to Kolchak as the Supreme Ruler of the Russian government, despite the opposite comments for example in the British Press. The fact that General Denikin had issued a proclamation on 12 June, which recognised Kolchak as the Supreme Ruler of the Russian state and the Supreme Commander-in -Chief of the Russian Armies [78] had little effect on the actions of the Allied governments. It is clear that the Allies were not convinced that Kolchak would follow the democratic direction; his liberal reply did not carry much weight, since it was well known that General Knox had guided him in the formulation of the letter. The Allied support to Kolchak also depended directly upon his military success. In June 1919 Kolchak's military success suddenly reversed; on 9 June,

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[76] Smele 1996, p. 211.

[77] Thompson 1966, p. 290.

[78] Denikine, A. The White Army. London 1930, pp. 267-68.

only four days after Kolchak's reply was received in Paris, the Bolsheviks recaptured Ufa, and a few days later his forces were in full retreat. [79]

At this point the British government re-examined its policy. As equipment and material provided by the British did not seem to do any good for Kolchak the British decided to concentrate their support on Denikin, even though he was clearly considered to be more reactionary and less democratic than Kolchak.[80] The decision, therefore, was based solely on his rapid success. At this time hopes were high for the downfall of the Bolshevism. During early autumn, even Kolchak seemed again to share the success started by Denikin's offensive in the south.[81]

Even though the British clearly opposed Denikin's 'Great Russian' policies in the Caucasus and elsewhere, the Cabinet actually never properly discussed whether British policy should be for a united or a dismembered Russian Empire. In the spring of 1919 the Cabinet had emphasised that in return for the military support of Denikin, Britain should secure from Denikin undertakings not to attack Georgia and other Caucasian states. If he failed to agree, British support would be withdrawn. [82] This decision was not, however, followed until much later, and the decision then was made purely to facilitate British withdrawal from the Civil War.

The whole issue of united versus dismembered Russia clearly seems to have been considered too complicated and time-consuming for detailed discussion in Cabinet. At the same time it is clear that there were strong views among the members of the Cabinet, not least the Prime Minister himself, that the united Russia might be 'a great menace' to the British in the East. In September 1919, at the meeting of the War Cabinet, Lloyd George stated that the future of the British empire might depend on how the Russian situation developed. His personal view was that the thought of a powerful and united Russia of 130 million inhabitants could not be viewed with equanimity. The

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[79] Smele 1996, pp. 211-15; Ullman 1968, pp. 168-170, 216; Kettle 1992, pp. 388-93.

[80] Ullman 1968, pp. 206-17.

[81] Ullman 1968, p. 232.

[82] Lloyd George papers, F 8/3/29. Winston Churchill to the Prime Minister 8.3.1919. House of Lords Record Office.

other members of the Cabinet seem to have agreed with his opinion; Winston Churchill was actually the only Cabinet-level advocate of the 'Great Russian' position. [83]

Consequently, all British troops, except for two battalions left at Batum until the completion of the Turkish peace settlement in the summer of 1920, had left the Caucasus by mid-October 1919. The decision of the withdrawal of the British military forces had been made already in March, after several meetings of the Inter-Departmental Conference on Middle Eastern Affairs. The actual withdrawal coincided with the evacuation of North Russia and the decision to inform the Baltic republics that Britain could not be involved in protecting them against their Russian enemies. [84]

During the summer 1919 the so called North West government had been formed, composed of prominent Russian émigrés. It had recognised the Estonian independence in August hoping to secure the Estonian participation in the attack on Petrograd together with General Iudenich's forces. The British position was made difficult by the allegations that the North-West government had been formed as a result of Allied pressure. There was indeed truth in these allegations, as the British officers in the Baltics were participating in the process, although without London's authority. Lieutenant-General Gough, in command of the Allied Military Mission to the Baltic states, telegraphed to Balfour that the Allies should comply with the Estonian demand of full *de jure* recognition from the Allies.

The British reacted with the decision of the Cabinet on 20 August that all the British officers involved should be formally reprimanded and told that London would not assent to their proposals to recognise the North-West government of Russia or the Estonian government. At the Paris Peace Conference, the Estonian request for *de jure* recognition was brought before the Supreme Council by Balfour. His opinion was that their statement to make peace with the Bolsheviks if the Allies would not recognise

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[83] Ullman 1968, pp. 219-221.

[84] Ullman 1968, pp. 226-232.

them was pure blackmail, and that the Council should not do anything. This instruction was followed by the Conference.[85]

On 21 May 1919 Winston Churchill suggested a parliamentary statement about British policy in Russia, which was agreed by Lloyd George. It stated that 'Russia must work out her own salvation. We had never any intention of sending British armies into Russia to enforce any particular solution of their internal affairs '. [86] However, the memorandum by Churchill on 25 September gives a totally opposite view of the situation when it stated that 'in return for the expenditure for supporting Denikin, the means will be provided for influencing Russian policy in a wise direction and in a direction friendly to Great Britain '. [87] The statements are clearly contradictory, as the British policy on the whole even at this point still was.

Yet the situation in the Civil War changed very quickly on all fronts. On 20 October, 1919, the Red Army captured Orel (200 miles from Moscow) from Denikin and by the end of the year they were on the Black Sea. The troops of General Iudenich in the Baltics also found their way finally barred. The end of October also brought the beginning of the end in Siberia. On 12 November Kolchak's government abandoned Omsk and began the journey to Irkutsk. After the fall of Irkutsk to the Bolsheviks, Kolchak was executed by the Bolsheviks at the beginning of February 1920. British involvement in Siberia did not long survive Kolchak. General Knox had left Omsk on November 7 and in an interview he admitted Omsk could not be saved and that he expected it to fall in five to fifteen days' time [88]. In late February and early March, 1920, the remains of the British military mission in Siberia were withdrawn; the very last party of the Mission left Vladivostok in early May [89]. At the beginning of 1920, Denikin's forces had retreated beyond the Don to Rostov and Novocherkaask. [90]

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[85] Ullman 1968, pp. 268-274.

[86] Lloyd George papers, F 8/3/56. Winston Churchill to the Prime Minister 21.5.1919. House of Lords Record Office.

[87] Lloyd George papers, F 201/1/11. Memorandum by the Secretary of State for War (W. Churchill) 25.8.1919. House of Lords Record Office.

[88] Article by Colonel Steveni L. in Manchester Guardian, July 1920. He acted as a special correspondent for the paper. Steveni Colonel L. Imperial War Museum, 93/25/1.

[89] WO 106/1280. Report of the final evacuation of Siberia 9.8.1920. PRO.

[90] Ullman 1968, pp. 250-54, 325.

By this time there was already a clear change in British government policies towards final termination of the British involvement in Russia. At the meeting of the Cabinet on January 29, 1920, the decision was made that active war against the Soviet government was out of the question. [91] The important decision to cut British assistance to Denikin had been made already in October 1919, when Winston Churchill had informed the House of Commons of the amount of the 'packet of final aid ' to Denikin. The final shipments of supplies were scheduled to arrive at Novorossiisk in late March 1920, after which no additional materials would be given.[92]

The policy of non-intervention had been promoted mostly by Lloyd George himself over the preceding months and were presented most powerfully in his Guildhall address of 8 November 1919, in which he publicly called for a halt to intervention. However, even if the individual role of Lloyd George was important, his Cabinet was largely in agreement with him. Churchill was the only member in total dissent with Lloyd George but the agreement of the majority of the Cabinet with Lloyd George guaranteed that there was no real contest between these two opinions. [93]

The decisions of the Cabinet to end British involvement in Russia were an outcome of variety of reasons. There were practical reasons for the downfall of the White generals and the fact that their defeat seemed inevitable by then. The cost of the intervention, as well as the fact that it was becoming increasingly unpopular in the eyes of the British public and among British troops, were undoubtedly important factors. The Labour Party had, on its part, been opposed to intervention from the beginning, and during the winter and spring of 1918-1919 it had started a more vigorous campaign against British intervention in Russia [94]. The so called *Hands off Russia* movement had started almost immediately after the armistice with Germany. Rallies and protests were organised by the campaign throughout the period of British involvement in Russia.[95] This, together

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91 Ullman, Richard H. Anglo-Soviet Relations, 1917-1921. Volume III: The Anglo-Soviet Accord. London; Princeton, New Jersey, 1972, pp. 12-14.

92 ibid., pp. 62-63; Ullman 1968, p, 304, footnote 18.

93 Ullman 1968, p. 363.

94 Ullman 1968, p. 62.

95 Silverlight, John. The Victor's Dilemma. Allied Intervention in the Russian Civil War. London 1970, p. 362.

with the wide unpopularity of the British intervention in Russia among British public, naturally had to be observed by the government. The number of strikes and riots in February 1919, for example, had reached such proportions that Lloyd George had to rush back to London from the Peace Conference to deal with the situation.[96]

In material side, the cost of the British operations in North Russia alone had amounted to £18,219,000. [97] The total expenditure of military operations in Russia between November 1918 and March 1920 amounted to £55,973,000. [98] The financial cost of intervention was simply becoming too high for the government. There was also another important reason, that of the importance of trade with Soviet Russia to Britain. Lloyd George had advocated peace with the Soviet government already at the Paris Peace Conference in January 1919; the possible acquisition of trade with Russia had certainly strongly motivated his actions. At this point there were no real possibilities for opening of trade negotiations, but from then on his efforts were guided towards possible trade negotiations.

The first open move on the issue was made in January 1920 in a form of a memorandum of E.F. Wise, British representative on the Supreme Economic Council, proposing the lifting of the blockade of Soviet Russia and the opening of trade through the Russian agricultural co-operative societies. Lloyd George was very much in favour of the proposal and at the Supreme Council Meeting in Paris on 14 January 1920, he put these suggestions to the French and Italian premiers. After two days the Supreme Council decided to lift the blockade and allow the trade through co-operatives. The determination of Lloyd George in the issue can be seen in the fact that he did not take anyone from the Foreign Office to the Paris meeting. Absent was even the Foreign Secretary, Earl Curzon, who had officially replaced Balfour in October 1919, although in practice he had taken care of the duties of the Foreign Secretary already for some time. [99] Lloyd George justified this on the grounds that the proceedings concerned the

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96 Thompson 1966, p. 13.

97 Ullman 1968, p. 191.

98 Parliamentary Papers. 1920 cmd 772, Vol. XXVIII. 317. Army. Statement of expenditure on naval and military operations in Russia from the date of armistice (11 November 1918) to 31 March 1920.

99 Silverlight 1970, pp. 359-360; Ullman 1968, pp. 296, 318, 363-64.

Ministry of Food and not the Foreign Office, but the real reason probably was that he was afraid Curzon would not have agreed to the plans. Indeed, together with Churchill, Curzon had actually been a severe critic of Lloyd George. [100]

Even if in principle, the trade negotiations were initiated with the Russian co-operatives, Lloyd George's conversation with his friend George Riddell in March 1920 shows that there was no doubt that in reality the British would be dealing with the Soviet Government. His answer to Riddell's question about the nature of the representatives that would come to Britain was that they would undoubtedly be the representatives of the Soviet government and not the co-operatives.[101]

The issue of trade was without doubt an important factor behind the British decision to withdraw from Russia. The replacement of Maksim Litvinov [102], Leonid Krasin, first arrived in London in May 1920 for trade negotiations, which proceeded slowly and with long interruptions. In the summer the Soviet representatives left Britain without any success, but returned in August to reopen the negotiations. Finally, an agreement was reached in November 1920, even though it took until March 1921 before the agreement was officially signed. With this agreement, however, the British government had decided to give *de facto* recognition to the Soviet government.[103]

The Russian Liberation Committee in Britain protested strongly against the British decision not to continue their support to the White forces in Russia, as well as against the resumption of trade with Soviet Russia. In its last Bulletin on 21 February 1920, it stated that they were witnessing an abrupt change in the British Russian policy. The Committee acknowledged that providing mere information had proved to be insufficient. Therefore, it had thought it necessary to re-shape the character of its work

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100 Ullman 1968, p. 103.

101 Silverlight 1970, pp. 360-61; Haigh et al. 1980, p. 70.

102 At the beginning of January 1918 Litvinov had been appointed as the Soviet representative in Britain. However, he was deported in the autumn of the same year, or in fact exchanged for Robert Bruce Lockhart, the British representative in Moscow. Once back in Russia, he became active in foreign policy, and acted as the Deputy Commissar for Foreign Affairs, and from 1930 to 1939 as People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs. After his departure, Krasin was the first representative of the Soviet government to arrive in Britain. (Reference Ullman 1968, pp. 87-88; Colin Holmes. Immigrants, Refugees and Revolutionaries, pp. 15-16. In Slatter (ed.) 1984.)

103 Ullman 1972, p. 91; Silverlight 1970, pp. 361-66.

and to 'state the Russian problem in full and discover the principal object of the Allies' Russian policy'. For this purpose, the Committee began on 5 February 1920 the publication of a weekly review entitled *The New Russia* and continued to include its Bulletin in the review under the 'Facts and documents' heading.[104] It was further stated that *The New Russia* would include contributors in all the principal European centres of Russian emigration and it wished to represent Russian opinion. [105]

In its first issue of 5 February 1920, the Liberation Committee informed its readers of the retreat of Kolchak and Denikin, and of the decisive change in the attitude of the British government towards Russia. They stated that the sympathies of the Committee were fully on the side of the policy of active support of Kolchak and Denikin, and that the impending change of British policy was the main reason for the appearance of their new journal. They also pointed out that the watchwords on their publications: 'No compromise with Bolshevism' and 'Russia united and free' were generally accepted by a very large section of Russian public opinion in Britain. The most important event during the last few weeks, according to the Committee, had been the formation of the United Council, a consultative organ of different Russian organisations. Its aim was to bring into contact different Russian political groups and give them the opportunity of free discussion and to establish a common ground of united Russian opinion.

The New Russia also stated that it was impossible to declare that the national resistance to Bolshevism was non-existent. Of the criticism of their other motto 'Russia united and free' the journal gave the example of the Prime Minister's 'fatal' speech in November where he had treated United Russia as a menace to Britain. According to the article, this speech cast gloom on all loyal Russians. It was the opinion of the Committee, that only people who fought under the banner of Russian unification would be able to re-establish Russia, and only those who acknowledged this banner could be looked upon by Russia as her friends. However, the article stated that this did not mean that United Russia would be the old centralised Russia. The New Russia could by no means return to the

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[104] Russian Liberation Union. Bulletin no. 52, 21 February 1920.

[105] The New Russia, vol. 1, no. 1, 5 February 1920, pp. 3-4.

past, but the paper would not argue about terms or decide whether 'autonomy' or 'federation' would be the most appropriate form for the New Russian Union.[106]

In the following issues, *The New Russia* continued to protest against the change in British policies and manifested their gratitude to the French for maintaining their friendly attitude towards anti-Bolshevik Russia and for resisting the British policy of trade negotiations with the Soviet government. [107] The comments of the Prime Minister on 10 February were also published in New Russia as 'the most important event of the Russian week in London'. According to the Prime Minister it was the fault of the volunteer army that during its occupation of large tracts of Southern Russia it managed to alienate the population. It was an opinion of his that Bolshevism could not be crashed by force of arms. Lloyd George also pointed out that the British 'obligations of honour' had been fulfilled and the chance to recover Russia given to the anti-Bolsheviks.[108] Unsurprisingly the Russian émigré society did not agree with any of these comments.

In March a resolution was passed by the United Council of the Russian organisations, according to which the resistance towards the Bolshevik Russia was by no means broken, and no peace was possible with the Bolsheviks regardless of any 'guarantees' they might offer. The Council also condemned the lifting of the blockade against Bolshevik Russia and the resumption of trade that followed from the decision. The resolution was signed by the Liberation Committee, Russian Luncheon Club, Russian Manufacturers and Traders' Association, Russian National Committee, and the Russian section of the Russo-British Bratsvo (Fraternity).[109]

Pavel Miliukov, the former Minister of the Foreign Affairs under the Provisional Government, published a leaflet called 'Russia and England' which was published as a Pamphlet No. 13 of the Russian Liberation Committee. Later Miliukov was to become the leading émigré 'opponent' of the White movement, and the supporter of the 'New Tactic' with the aim of the Kadet Party forming an alliance with the Right Socialist

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[106] The New Russia, vol. 1, no. 1, 5 February 1920, pp. 1-4, 28-29.

[107] The New Russia, vol. 1, no. 5, 4 March 1920, no. 17, 27 May 1920 and no. 19, 10 June 1920.

[108] The New Russia, vol. 1, no. 3, 19 February 1920, pp. 66-67.

[109] The New Russia, vol. 1, no. 5, 4 March 1920, pp. 156-57.

Revolutionaries. At the beginning of the 1920, Miliukov was, however, still supporting the White case. In his leaflet Miliukov urged the Western Governments to accord Kolchak and Denikin recognition and assistance. He also condemned the 'non-intervention' policy of Britain that was adopted at the beginning of 1920 and gave both sentimental and legal points of view why the Allies should help the non-Bolshevik forces. [110]

Other prominent Russian émigrés also expressed their views against the change of British policy and trade negotiations with the Soviets. Vladimir D. Nabokov, a well-known lawyer and one of the leading members of the Kadet Party (and a father of the future famous writer V.V. Nabokov) condemned the British policy in his article in *The New Russia*. According to his article Russian Liberals had always relied on the support and sympathy of British Liberalism. To their great dismay, the British had continued their efforts towards discrediting all the anti-Bolshevik elements that had been fighting for the salvation of Russia. According to Nabokov, Bolshevism was in contradiction with accepted fundamentals of British Liberalism and should be treated as a real fact which threatened to spread like an epidemic. [111] His brother, Konstantin Nabokov also firmly insisted that the Russian national movement was still in existence, although it seemed to fail to impress the Western Europe. [112] Naturally, because of his official status as Russian representative he had to be more careful with his comments.

These arguments did not, however, have any influence on the British policy. After all, there were more important political and economic considerations than the opinion of the Russian colony in Britain. The final decision of the discontinuance of involvement in Russia had been made by the government in January 1920 at the meeting of the Cabinet. The trade negotiations with the Soviet government had been started in May 1920. Britain could not, however, totally abandon its duty towards the White Russian forces it had been supporting, and towards whom it was considered to have certain 'obligations of honour'.

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[110] Russian Liberation Committee. Pamphlet no. 13. 'Russia and England' by Paul Miliukov; Pipes Richard. Struve: Liberal on the Right, 1905-1944. Cambridge, Massachusetts and London 1980, pp. 279, 330-335.

[111] The New Russia, vol. 1, no. 1, 5 February 1920.

[112] The New Russia, vol. 2, no. 20, 17 June 1920.

3.3. The Refugee Problem

The question of obligations of honour towards non-Bolshevik forces first became an issue in Archangel and Murmansk from where the British forces were withdrawn in the autumn of 1919.

The evacuation of Russians might have actually become a more serious problem to the British had the decision of Miller, or in the end Kolchak as the Supreme Commander, been different. General Ironside made an offer to General Miller on 30 July 1919 to evacuate also the North Russian government, the officers and part of the civilian population, all up to 13,000 persons for whom Britain was ready to provide the necessary shipping. General Sir Henry Rawlinson, who had been sent out as the Commander-in-Chief of North Russia in August 1919, also suggested to Miller that the British would evacuate his forces to Murmansk, which would have been easier to defend as well as more accessible to supplies from Britain. General Miller, however, firmly declined this offer.

However, the British government had also announced that it considered it to be its duty to offer a means of escape to all Russians who had remained loyal to the Allied cause in Northern Russia.[113] In the War Office estimates for the possible evacuation of Murmansk and Archangel it was stated that for 13,000 Allied troops in Archangel about 10 to 15 ships would be needed.[114] Here civilians or Russian officers were not mentioned. The report of the General Staff from 20 June 1919, on the present intentions regarding evacuation of Archangel and Murmansk, listed very carefully the number of Allied troops in these places. However, in the end it was also mentioned that it might be necessary to evacuate certain civilians and local Russian troops, estimated as 18,000 in Archangel and 1,000 in Murmansk. [115] These estimates were, however, done before the final decision of Miller not to evacuate his troops to Murmansk, or anywhere else. Another question is whether the British could have actually found the necessary

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[113] Ullman 1968, pp. 197-98; Strakhovsky 1944, p. 212.

[114] WO 106/1169. Notes on possible evacuation of Murmansk and Archangel. PRO.

[115] WO 106/1177. Present intention as regards evacuation of Archangel and Murmansk, 20.6.1919. PRO.

shipping had it been necessary to evacuate all those people. The Ministry of Shipping had informed Ironside through the War Office in July that difficulties would be expected in obtaining the necessary tonnage and that they should be informed by the end of July if Russians, civilians and others were to be evacuated by the British. [116]

It is difficult to state the exact number of the Russian refugees that in the end were evacuated from Archangel and Murmansk because of the conflicting figures given in different sources. However, it is clear that the numbers were much less than it was originally estimated. According to Ullman, the total number of Russians evacuated from Archangel was 5,596, of whom 911 were military and the rest civilians. [117] This information is based on the telegram of General Rawlinson to War Office on 4 October 1919. In his telegram Rawlinson reported that although every facility was given to civilians at Archangel, 'the poorer classes did not come forward in the numbers expected '. [118]

Of those who left most were taken to the Baltic states, and the rest to the Black Sea. There were, however, also other nationalities than Russians among those who were evacuated; about 1,000 Poles, 2,000 Lithuanians and 250 Estonians forming a substantial proportion of those evacuated to the Baltics. Those taken to South Russia (Black Sea) were Russians whom Denikin had agreed to receive [119]. According to Rawlinson's report only 192 civilians were taken to England.[120] The evacuation of Murmansk was completed couple of weeks later, but only a few hundred Russian were added to general evacuation figures. [121]

The Black Sea refugees had created a 'small' refugee problem during the spring 1919. These refugees were mainly from Odessa and the Crimea as a result of the Bolshevik successes in the area. The success of the Bolshevik army also resulted in the withdrawal

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116 WO 33/967A, File 2673. From WO to Major-General Ironside 16.7.1919. PRO.

117 Ullman 1968, p. 198. The same figure is given in Strakhovsky 1944, p. 121.

118 WO 33/975, File 3717. From Commander-In-Chief, North Russia, to WO 4.10.1919. PRO.

119 WO 33/967A, File 3074. From Denikin's Mission, Ekaterinodar, August 1919. PRO.

120 WO 33/975, File 3717. From Commander-In-Chief, North Russia, to WO 4.10.1919. PRO.

121 Ullman 1968, p. 198.

of the French from Odessa in April 1919. Some refugees were evacuated by the British ships and taken to a British refugee camp in Malta. However, the British claimed that because these refugees came entirely from Odessa and the Crimea that fell under the French sphere, they should be taken care of by the French. The British ships in the Black Sea were also under French direction. Therefore the Treasury stated in June that no more refugees should be sent to British territory and no further expenditure from British funds should be incurred in respect of refugees from this region. Steps should also be taken to approach the French government that any further refugees who may have to be evacuated from the Black Sea should be sent to French territory.[122]

In July the Crimea was again in 'White hands' and it was possible to consider the repatriation of these refugees back to the Crimea. In the end many refugees were successfully repatriated, although the Governor General of Malta pointed out that finances were the chief difficulty. He also stated that many Russians who were destitute had friends in Paris or London who would finance them but they were unable to obtain visas from Military Control Offices in Paris or England. [123]

The retreat of Denikin's forces in South Russia in the spring 1920 caused a new, and by far the most severe refugee problem. For the British the situation became more problematic because of the guarantees that the British authorities had given to the White armies without the consent of the Foreign Office. British consular representative in Odessa, Mr Lowdon, had given assurances about the evacuation of about 30,000 people. This was strictly denied by the Cabinet in a telegram message: 'It is impossible to evacuate refugees from Odessa or any other Russian port, for on sanitary grounds no country will receive them. The only policy for the population is to organise itself for a vigorous defence'. [124] In the end at least some Russians were evacuated at the time of the evacuation of the British Military Mission from Odessa in early February, when Odessa fell to the Bolsheviks. Captain Swinley stated in the papers relating to his service in HMS Ceres, used for the evacuation of Odessa, that although it was originally

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122 FO 371/4022, File 87800, Paper N 90170. Treasury to FO 6.6.1919. PRO.

123 FO 371/4022, File 87800, Paper N116322. The Governor of Malta to the Secretary of State for the Colonies 8.8.1919. PRO.

124 Silverlight 1970, p. 353.

intended to remove about 500 cadets and their families, the number evacuated was more like 1,300.[125]

Major General H.C. Holman, head of the British Military Mission and Sir Halford Mackinder, British High Commissioner in South Russia [126], acting on their own authority and without reference to London, had guaranteed Denikin that the British would take responsibility for the evacuation of the families of Russian officers. This promise was made on 10 January 1920.[127] Their justification was that White officers were becoming completely demoralised by the fear of Bolshevik reprisals against their families and that 'in view of the Archangel precedent, it seems unthinkable we could leave these women and children to be murdered'. [128]

In London it was felt that they had been left no alternative but to keep this promise. However, in the Cabinet meetings of 27th and 29th of January the decision was taken that refugees could not be removed from Russia. The main reason for this was that because of the likely incidence of disease, few countries would receive them. Also it would be impossible to find the money required for settling a large number of Russian refugees abroad and the British government certainly could not provide it. Therefore the Cabinet decided that the refugees would only be taken to the Crimea which was still in anti-Bolshevik hands. Although the formal British guarantee applied only to the families of White officers, the Cabinet decided that if Denikin lacked sufficient shipping of his own to transport all the troops to the Crimea that were necessary for its defence, any unused British shipping could be used for that purpose.[129]

The final defeat of Denikin's forces came quickly in early March 1920. The race was on to reach Novorossiisk before the Red forces. The situation there became catastrophic

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[125] Swinley, Captain C.S.B, RN: Papers re service in light cruiser HMS Ceres, used for evacuation of the British Military Mission to the White Russians from Odessa. Imperial War Museum, 83/44/1.

[126] Mackinder has probably the shortest record as High Commissioner. The British did not have a political officer attached to Denikin before January 1920, when Mackinder arrived at Denikin's headquarters. At this point there was little to do for him, besides arrange for the evacuation of the Volunteer Army. Mackinder only served as High Commissioner from 10 January to 16 January when he returned England. Reference: Ullman 1968, pp. 217-18 and Ullman 1972, p. 87.

[127] WO 106/1194. General Milne to WO 15.1.1920. PRO; Ullman 1968, p. 325.

[128] Haigh et al. 1980, pp. 56-57; Ullman 1968, pp. 250-53, 325.

[129] Ullman 1972, pp. 61-62.

and there were many more refugees than there were places on ships, both foreign and Russian. The only guarantee of some order was the presence of the nearly 2,000 officers and men of the British military mission. The troops of the military mission were augmented in these tasks by a battalion from Constantinople, sent by General Sir George Milne, the commander of the British Army of the Black Sea.

Mackinder had only guaranteed Denikin that the families of the officers would be evacuated. In Milne's view it was also essential for the future of Russia that the Volunteer army and the non-Bolshevik intelligentsia be evacuated to the Crimea from where they could enter into negotiations with the Bolsheviks. London gave instructions leaving the decision up to Milne but the War Office was careful to point out that the safety of Denikin should be guaranteed. The office for the evacuation of the wives and families of the Don and Volunteer Armies, as well as various officials, had already opened in Novorossiisk on 19 January. The first boat, S.S. Hanover left Novorossiisk for Prinkipo, an island on the Sea of Marmora, on 26 January with 1,600 people. Two other ships also left before 4 March 1920. [130]

On 25 and 26 March Russian ships evacuated over 60,000 people and on the following night another 10,000 troops of Denikin's army, together with the British military mission, were removed by British warships. The evacuation was completed on 27 March. [131] General Denikin together with some of his Volunteer Army also left Novorossiisk for Theodosia in the Crimea on a Russian destroyer. [132] General Milne's report from Constantinople on the situation in South Russia in April, stated that the situation in the Crimea was not very hopeful. About 40,000 troops had been evacuated there and the country was literally crowded with refugees. There was also still a part of British Military Mission in the Crimea, about 275 officers and 450 other ranks, but no fighting troops.[133]

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130 WO 106/1210. Evacuation of Refugees from Novorossiisk, March 1920. PRO.

131 The Times 30.3.1920; Ullman 1972, p. 68.

132 The Times 30.3.1920 and 31.3.1920; WO 158/746. Report by Gen. Bridges March 1920. PRO.

133 WO 106/1211. Situation in South Russia, April 1920. PRO.

Lloyd George used his best efforts trying to persuade the Red Cross to provide some doctors and nurses for the refugees who were evacuated from Novorossiisk to the Crimea.[134] Sir Arthur Stanley from the British Red Cross answered that the Red Cross could supply doctors and nurses but could not finance the undertaking. He said that if the government were willing to find the money, the required personnel could easily be found. According to him the poor results attained by an appeal recently made by the British Committee of the Russian Red Cross in England did not encourage the belief that any money was likely to be forthcoming from the public, either. [135] The government, on the other hand, did not seem to be more willing to spend money than the 'great public'.

The huge number of refugees crowded in the Crimea naturally caused a very serious situation. Despite this there was general agreement inside the British government that evacuations to foreign countries were out of question. General Denikin had appealed to the British in the middle of February to provide coal and tonnage so that refugees could be evacuated to foreign countries. The optimistic tone of his message saying that he was sure British government would not forget its promises [136] did not affect the British decision. As an alternative 'solution' the British shipped several thousand refugees to camps in Egypt, Cyprus, Prinkipo and Lemnos to be maintained at British expense.[137] However, a number of refugees also managed to go to foreign countries, especially if they could pay their way abroad. They went primarily to Romania, Bulgaria, and Yugoslavia. Some stayed in Constantinople, where most of the ships embarked for from the Crimea.[138]

In London the Cabinet discussed the situation in 31 March. A memorandum was presented, stating that thousands of refugees had been evacuated and were scattered among the islands of the Aegean and in the Crimea. It was decided that Denikin would

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[134] Lloyd George papers, F 9/2/14. Lloyd George to Sir Arthur Stanley 29.3.1920. House of Lords Records Office.

[135] Lloyd George papers, F 45/10/4. Arthur Stanley to Lloyd George 2.2.1920.

[136] WO 33/996, File 4761. From Denikin's Mission, Novorossiisk, to WO 17.2.1920; FO 371/4013, File 63588, Paper 179777. Appeal from Denikin 5.2.1920. PRO.

[137] WO 106/1210. Evacuation of refugees from Novorossiisk, March 1920. PRO; WO 33/1000, File no. 5932. General Headquarters, Constantinople to WO 16. 4.1920.

[138] FO 371/4013, File 63588, Paper 178828. FO to Sir A. Stanley 25.2.1920; Simpson 1939, pp. 68-69.

be advised to give up the struggle. Sir Henry Wilson, the Chief of Imperial General Staff, commented the episode in his diary: 'So ends in disaster another of Winston's military attempts - Antwerp, Dardanelles, Denikin '. [139] This comment of course seems quite unfair, since although Churchill had remained the strongest supporter of intervention, he by no means could dictate the British policy. Moreover, his influence certainly never approached that of Lloyd George.[140]

Soon after the collapse of Denikin's army the British government sent instructions to the British High Commissioner at Constantinople, Admiral deRobeck, to advise Denikin to come to an agreement with the Soviet government. It was further stated that if Denikin failed to do so, the British government would cease to furnish him with any assistance. Denikin answered to the British 'proposal' that he would never act as a mediator for the armistice with the Bolsheviks [141]. At the same time he announced his intention to resign and to name General Vrangel' to his place. Vrangel' took command on 4 April 1920, and Denikin left immediately for Constantinople. From there he soon continued to England, arriving at Southampton on 18 April with his wife and son and the daughter of General Kornilov, whom he had succeeded as commander of the volunteer army. This meant that de Robeck had to hand the British government note to Vrangel'. [142]

At first the note seemed to accomplish its purpose, and Vrangel' agreed to negotiate with the Soviet government to secure a safe asylum for those who had fought against the Bolsheviks. These negotiations, however, never occurred. Instead, in June his forces launched an offensive against Bolshevik forces. As a consequence, the British broke relations with him and withdrew their military mission from the Crimea in June 1920.[143] Therefore, when the final defeat of the White forces happened in November 1920 the British refused to take any part in the evacuation of the Crimea. France, on the other hand, had recognised his government in the Crimea as the *de facto* government of

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[139] Silverlight 1970, p. 356; Ullman 1972, p. 69.
[140] Ullman 1968, pp. 294-295.
[141] Denikine 1930, p.350.
[142] Silverlight 1970, p. 357; Ullman 1972, pp. 71-72.
[143] Simpson 1939, p. 70; Ullman 1972, pp. 73, 83-87.

South Russia and felt therefore obliged to assist in the evacuation of military and civilian refugees. [144]

The evacuation numbered over 130,000 people who were distributed to various camps in the Aegean, for example in Gallipoli and Lemnos, as well as to Bulgaria, Romania, Yugoslavia and other foreign countries. Some 35,000 stayed in Constantinople, which was already crowded with refugees from the earlier evacuations.[145] Constantinople had been occupied by the Allied forces already in March and the Turks had been informed that the occupation would be continued until peace terms were executed.[146]

The British Cabinet had reached the decision on 11 November that no help would be given even in evacuating women and children, not to mention fighting forces. Thus there were no British ships among those who embarked from the Crimea with Vrangel's refugees.[147] The official statement of the Cabinet was that the British Government should not undertake any action for the evacuation of refugees other than those of British nationality, and that this policy of strict neutrality should not be compromised on any account. The Secretary of State for War, Winston Churchill, asked that his protest would be recorded against this decision. According to his view this decision would probably result in a massacre of civilians in the Crimea.[148] His view, however, had no wider support inside the Cabinet.

The reasons behind the Cabinet decision were naturally to a large extent material; the government did not want to take responsibility for the maintenance of new refugees. There were probably also political considerations behind it; one of these being the progressing trade negotiations with the Soviet government which were considered of a great importance to the British government who did not want any disturbances in these negotiations.

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144 Ullman 1972, p. 237.

145 Simpson 1939, pp. 69-70.

146 Cameron, Evan. Goodbye Russia. Adventures of H.M. transport Rio Negro. London 1934, pp. 82-83.

147 Cameron 1934, p. 311.

148 Silverlight 1970, pp. 358-59.

The decision of the Cabinet was also kept despite appeals from the French and American governments, from Mr. Evgenii Sablin, the Russian representative in Britain, and even from King himself. The reply of Earl Curzon to the request of a French Admiral for British assistance for the evacuation of Sevastopol was that no more refugees should become a charge of HMG which was already heavily overburdened in this respect. He instructed the Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean that no assistance should be given by British ships to Russians attempting to leave South Russia. Curzon continued that the guarantee given to General Denikin by Sir Halford Mackinder in January was fulfilled on the collapse of the Denikin's volunteer army at the end of March and HMG did not have any further obligations towards the Russians at present. The only obligation they had was to protect those refugees they had assisted earlier. [149]

The French Ambassador who had requested assistance of British vessels in evacuation was also notified of the negative answer from the British government. In the Foreign Office Minutes Emrys Evans made a comment that he was afraid that if the British helped by sending ships, they would quickly have refugees on their hands. Therefore he was of an opinion that French should be allowed to do everything or the British should at least obtain a guarantee that refugees carried on British ships would be looked after by the French. [150]

The U.S. Ambassador also approached the Foreign Secretary requesting British assistance for Russian refugees in Constantinople. The British government repeated in its reply that HMG had already assumed very large liabilities in connection with the refugees who had left South Russia on the collapse of General Denikin's army earlier that year and were therefore unable to enter into any fresh commitments.[151] Evgenii Sablin, who followed Konstantin Nabokov as unofficial *Chargé d'Affaires* of Russian interests in September 1919 [152], asked if Admiral de Robeck, the British High

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[149] FO 371/5424, File 46, Papers N 2262 and N 2264. Correspondence between C-in-C, Mediterranean and Lord Curzon. November 1920. PRO.

[150] FO 371/5424, File 46, Paper N 2462. French Ambassador to FO 15.11.1920 and Evans' comment in 16.11.1920. PRO.

[151] FO 371/5419, File 29, Paper N 3604. FO to the U.S. Embassy 8.12.1920. PRO.

[152] FO 372/1263, File 123957. FO to His Excellency Mons. Sazonov 10.9.1919. PRO.

Commissioner in Constantinople, could assist in the evacuation of the refugees in the Crimea. The government reply was again negative, even though Admiral de Robeck himself had proposed that he would be willing to direct the evacuation of refugees to Egypt.[153]

Quite surprisingly, a message was also sent by Lord Stamfordham, Secretary of the King, to the Prime Minister on November 14, that the King appealed to the government 'to save, if possible, the women and children from a massacre by the Bolsheviks '. The reply from Davies stated that Lloyd George had pointed out that the difficulty was the maintenance of the refugees afterwards. The maintenance of the refugees left by Denikin had already cost a million pounds and the House of Commons would not be willing to give further funds, especially because Vrangel' had refused to take the advice of the British government. Therefore, Britain did not have any further responsibility with regard to him.[154]

As a 'friendly gesture' the British, however, agreed to let the French use Lemnos as a camp for refugees.[155] In addition, despite constant refusal to accept any responsibility for refugees, the chaotic situation in Constantinople led the British government to promise a grant of £ 20,000 for the relief of destitute civilian refugees in Constantinople in December 1920. This money was authorised for the use of General Harington, the Commander-in Chief in Constantinople, to be expended directly by him and was stated to be entirely independent of the responsibilities in connection with refugees undertaken by the French. [156] Apart from this grant, the British did not take any responsibility for the maintenance and help of Vrangel's refugees in late 1920.

In January 1921 the French Embassy addressed the British government asking about the £1,200,000 which the British were alleged to owe to the Russian Volunteer Fleet. The

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153 FO 371/5424, File 46, Paper N 2743. Mr. Sabline to Mr. Gregory 15.11.1920 and Mr. Gregory to Mr. Sabline 18.11.1920. PRO.

154 Lloyd George papers, F/29/4/32. Lord Stamfordham to the PM 14.11.1920 and Davies to Lord Stamfordham 15.11.1920. House of Lords Record Office.

155 FO 371/5419, File 29, Paper N 3388. British High Commissioner in Constantinople to Earl Curzon 22.11.1920. PRO.

156 FO 371/5419, File 29, Paper N 3971. WO to FO 6.12.1920. PRO; WO 33/1000, File no. 6806. WO to General Headquarters, Constantinople, 6.12.1920. PRO.

Foreign Office replied that as the British government had never recognised General Vrangel's government, they were not prepared to consider the question of paying any sum to it in respect of the Russian Volunteer Fleet.[157] The French Ambassador explained that the payment was not required on behalf of General Vrangel's government, but on behalf of the Russian Relief Committee, set up in Paris. The British decision nevertheless remained unaltered. The comment of Emrys Evans from the Foreign Office was that this did not alter British contention in the least because they did not recognise the Russian Relief Committee as a representative of the old Russian government. The French Ambassador was informed accordingly about the British view.[158]

The British view was dealt with a greater detail in a memorandum by Evans from 22 January 1921. In the memorandum Evans pointed out that the French had announced they would cease to give support for refugees after January and that a Russian Committee had been set up in Paris to take care of the refugee problem. The French had urged the British to join in supporting this refugee body. According to Evans this proposal practically meant that half of Vrangel's refugees should be provided by the British, and that any effort of this kind by the French should be firmly resisted. Evans also reminded that French had promised eleven million francs towards the maintenance of Denikin's refugees in early 1920 but had later replied that the money had already been spent. [159] The fact that French did not keep their promise with the Denikin refugees who were left as British responsibilities was a further factor of justification for the British refusal to take any responsibility of the evacuation and maintenance of Vrangel's refugees.

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157 FO 371/6889, File 366, Paper N 707. FO to Mons. le Comte St. Aulaire, French Embassy 20.1.921. PRO.

158 FO 371/6889, File 366, Paper N 1098. From French Ambassador to the FO 22.1.1921 and Emrys Evans' comment in the Minutes 25.2.1921. PRO.

159 FO 371/6864, File 38, Paper N 1087. Memorandum by Emrys Evans 22.1.1921. PRO.

3.4. Concluding Remarks

Despite the fact that of all the foreign governments, the British government had provided most support to the White forces in the Russian Civil War, after the defeat of the White forces the government tried carefully to avoid responsibility for the 'White Russian' refugees. The British involvement in the Russian Civil War started with the aim to reconstitute the eastern front against Germany. From this initial aim the involvement grew to a 'crusade against Bolshevism' in the form of military and material support to various anti-Bolshevik governments and armies. By February 1920 this campaign had been abandoned, the British forces withdrawn, and the British government was anxious to establish relations, primarily trade relations, with Soviet Russia. Earlier statements on the 'obligations of honour', with which the British government had repeatedly justified its involvement in the Russian Civil War, were not the most important principles to govern the future policies of the government towards Russian refugees. This can clearly be seen in the careful policies of the British government not to enter into any further responsibilities for Russian refugees after the collapse of General Denikin's army, as well as in the strict policy of the government against the admission of Russian refugees to Britain.

CHAPTER 4: THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT AND THE RUSSIAN REFUGEES

4.1. The Question of Entry to Britain

This chapter will concentrate on the official policy of the British government towards Russian refugees from the Bolshevik regime, primarily in relation to their admission to Britain, and the British policy of maintaining a specific group of refugees in camps. The chapter will evaluate the reasons and the outcome of the British policies as well as consider whether the treatment of Russian refugees was consistent with the existing immigration procedures and legislation.

The main period of the Russian emigration to Britain occurred during the coalition government of Lloyd George, in office from 1916 to 1922. This government consisted of Conservatives, Liberal-Unionists (defectors from Liberal Party) and roughly half the Liberals in the House of Commons. The Labour Party was also officially part of the coalition, but they only held few ministerial positions, and the majority of the ministerial positions were held by the Conservatives and the Liberals (or Liberal-Unionists). In 1922 the Conservatives took office and stayed in power, except for a short period of Labour government during 1924, until 1929 when Ramsay MacDonald came to power at the head of Labour government.[1]

From the very beginning the British government took a strict attitude against the entry of Russian refugees to Britain. The political lines of the government in the refugee question were formulated immediately after the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia. This was considered necessary because emigration from Russia had started already before the Bolshevik Revolution, and had further increased after the Revolution. British subjects were evacuated in large numbers from Russia after the Revolution. At the same time

[1] Morgan 1993, pp. 591-608; Butler, David & Freeman, Jennie. British Political Facts 1900-1968. London 1969, pp. 9-18.

British representatives in Russia received increasing numbers of applications from Russian subjects to leave Russia for Britain. [2]

At the end of 1917, the Conservative Home Secretary Sir George Cave forwarded to the Foreign Office a Memorandum, according to which the conditions at the present time did not enable Britain to welcome any incursion of aliens. It was further noted that Russian refugees were very numerous and yet they were unlikely to be of economic value to Britain. Cave's opinion was that if the general admission of refugees from Russia should be desirable on grounds of humanity, the burden should be shared equally between France and Britain. He also instructed that if Mr. Balfour, the Foreign Secretary, concurred, he should submit the matter without delay to the War Cabinet with necessary recommendations. [3] Mr. Balfour agreed to Sir George Cave's opinion that aliens should not be allowed to take refuge in the UK, except in special cases.[4]

As an outcome of these considerations, a Home Office letter to the Foreign Office on 18 January 1918 stated that the Foreign Secretary should instruct the British Embassy at Petrograd that 'facilities should not be given, save in exceptional cases, for Russians and other aliens to leave Russia for the UK'. [5] The latter part of Home Secretary Cave's consideration, that of the equal burden of refugees between France and England, was not going to be of much importance in the future considerations of British authorities. The statement of the Home Office, that facilities should be given only in exceptional cases for Russians to leave Russia for the UK became the official line of British policy. All cases were considered and treated individually in relation to entry to Britain. The British Consul in Archangel, Mr. Young, was instructed that no visas should be granted to Russian subjects to come to England without reference to the military control officer, or if necessary, to the authorities in London. [6]

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[2] FO 371/3297, File 1334. Evacuation of British subjects from Russia; HO 45/11068, File 374355. Decypher from Sir George Buchanan 26.12.1917. PRO.

[3] FO 371/3020, File 241424. HO to FO 21.12.1917. PRO.

[4] HO 45/11068, File 374355. From FO to HO 28.12.1917. PRO.

[5] FO 371/3307, File 4790. HO to FO 8.1.1918. PRO.

[6] FO 371/3297, File 1334, Paper 78229. HO to FO 2.5.1918. PRO.

Actually, the outcome of the British policy on the issue of asylum to the Russian royal family already provided an example of the future attitude and policy of the British government towards the entry of Russian refugees. The issue was first raised by Pavel Miliukov, the Minister of the Foreign Affairs of the Provisional Government in March 1917, after the royal family had been placed under supervision at Tsarskoe Selo. The British Ambassador in Russia, Sir George Buchanan approached the Foreign Office on 19 March, informing them that he had met both Miliukov and Kerenskii, and that Miliukov had enquired whether any arrangements were being made for the Tsar and his family to go to England. Buchanan had replied in the negative.[7]

A few days later Buchanan approached the Foreign Office again. He advised that Miliukov had stated that he was most anxious to get the Tsar out of Russia, especially as the radical elements were very much against the royal family, and that he would be grateful if King and HMG would at once offer him asylum in England. Miliukov had also urged that an immediate answer should be given to this enquiry. Sir George Buchanan himself added that he entirely agreed with the opinion of Miliukov that the Tsar should leave before the agitation grew and asked the Foreign Office to offer asylum in Britain as soon as possible. [8]

At this point, the British government could not postpone their answer any more. The issue was considered at the Imperial War Cabinet meeting of Lloyd George, Lord Hardinge, the Under Secretary of the Foreign Office, Lord Stamfordham, King's private secretary and Andrew Bonar Law, Chancellor of the Exchequer. [9] A decision to offer asylum was made and an immediate telegram was sent to Sir George Buchanan from the Foreign Office stating that 'in order to meet the request made by the Russian government, the King and the HMG readily offer asylum to the Emperor and Empress in England'. [10] It was, however, carefully pointed out that in order to avoid any possible

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[7] FO 371/2995, File 811, Papers 58700 and 58780. Sir George Buchanan to FO 19.3.1917. PRO.

[8] FO 371/2998, File 3743, Papers 60234 and 61184. Sir George Buchanan to FO 21.3.1917 and 22.3.1917. PRO.

[9] Occleshaw, Michael. The Romanov Conspiracies. London 1993, p. 89; King, Greg. The Last Empress. The Life and Times of Alexandra Feodorovna, Tsarina of Russia. London 1994, p. 313.

[10] FO 371/2998, File 3743, Paper (?). FO to Sir George Buchanan 22.3.1917. PRO.

doubt in the future, Buchanan should emphasise the fact that the offer had been entirely due to the initiative of the Russian government. [11]

The travel arrangements of the royal family could not, however be facilitated right away. Pressure from extremists to prevent the Tsar leaving was increasing, and in addition the Tsar's children had measles, and they had to wait until they were better. This delay proved fatal, because the asylum issue was meanwhile reconsidered in Britain by the King. [12] At the time of the asylum offer King George V seemed to be very much in favour of granting an asylum and he had sent a very sympathetic telegram to the Tsar Nikolai on 19 March. In the telegram he pointed out that the events of the last week had deeply distressed him, that his thoughts were constantly with the Tsar, and stated that he would always remain the true and devoted friend to him. [13] This message, however, was considered too politically sensitive, both by Miliukov and British authorities, and it was never delivered to the Tsar.[14]

It is therefore surprising that it was actually the King himself, and not the government, who soon changed his view on the asylum issue. The February Revolution in Russia, with the abolition of an autocratic system, had clearly been met with satisfaction by wide circles in Britain. More radically, however, it also led to expressions of anti-monarchist opinions at home in Britain. Opposition to the British asylum offer to the Tsar and his family was most prominent in the left-wing circles. [15]

Fearing over his own position, George V changed his mind on the desirability of the Russian royal family coming to Britain. Only a week after the British government's offer of asylum, a message from the King was sent to the Foreign Secretary by Lord Stamfordham pointing out that the King had been thinking over the government's proposal that the Tsar should come to England, and could not help doubting whether

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[11] FO 371/3008, File 61920. FO to Sir George Buchanan 22.3.1917. PRO.

[12] Summers, Anthony & Mangold, Tom. The File on the Tsar. London 1976, p. 248.

[13] FO 800/205, File 53. Telegram of King George V to Tsar Nikolai II, 19.3.1917. PRO.

[14] Nicolson, Harold. King George V. His Life and Reign. London 1952, pp. 299-300; FO 371/2998, File 3743, Paper 63163. FO to Sir George Buchanan 23.3.1917.

[15] War Memoirs of David Lloyd George, Vol. I, pp. 969-71. London 1938; King 1994, pp. 311-12; Nicolson 1952, pp. 299, 307-8.

this would be advisable. [16] Balfour, however, replied that even though HM's ministers realised the difficulties, they did not think that it was possible to withdraw the invitation, which had been sent.[17] As a constitutional monarch, the King had to accept the decision of his ministers, and a reply was provided by Stamfordham that if this was the government's wish, he had to regard the matter as settled.[18]

The King, however, did not leave the issue there. A few days later he asked Lord Stamfordham to write to the Foreign Secretary. Two letters reached the Foreign Office on 6 April. In the first letter it was stated that the King was becoming more and more concerned about the question of the Tsar and his family coming to Britain. It was stated that His Majesty had received letters from people of all classes, saying how much the matter was being discussed, not only in clubs but also by working men and Labour Members of the Parliament. The King again asked whether, after consulting the Prime Minister, Sir George Buchanan should not be advised to ask the Russian government to make some other plans for the further residence of the imperial family. A postscript of the letter was even more outspoken: ' Most people appear to think the invitation was initiated by the King, whereas it was his *government* who did so'.[19]

At this point the Prime Minister seemed to become more receptive to the arguments of the King. At the Cabinet meeting on 13 April Lloyd George repeated the words of the King, although without mentioning the 'sensitive source', and it was decided that 'in these circumstances the South of France... might be more suitable place of residence for the Imperial family'. The Foreign Secretary was authorised to telegraph these considerations to Sir George Buchanan, as well as instruct him not to make any communication to the Russian government on the subject. [20] On the same day Buchanan was invited to express his opinion.[21] Sir George replied that he entirely shared the view that if there were any danger of anti-monarchist movement in Britain, it would be better

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16 FO 800/205, File 63. Lord Stamfordham to Balfour 30.3.1917. PRO

17 FO 800/205, File 65. Balfour to Lord Stamfordham 2.4.1917. PRO.

18 FO 800/205, File 66. Lord Stamfordham to Balbour 4.4.1917. PRO.

19 Summers & Mangold 1976, p. 249.

20 CAB 23/2 (1 March-31 May 1917), Minute 118, Meeting of the War Cabinet 13.4.1917. PRO.

21 FO 800/205, File 88. FO to Sir George Buchanan 13.4.1917. PRO.

that the Imperial family did not come to Britain. He continued that if only France would consent, it would be far better from the British point of view that the Tsar should go to France. [22] The British Ambassador in Paris, Lord Bertie, however, clearly stated in his letter that he did not think the royal family would be welcomed in France, either. [23]

Years later Aleksander Kerenskii offered an account of these happenings in his memoirs *La vérité sur le Masssacre des Romanovs*. According to him it was either in June or early July when the British Ambassador, Sir George Buchanan, had called on Tereshchenko, the new Minister for Foreign Affairs. According to Kerenskii, Sir George had been greatly distressed and had brought with him a letter from a high official of the Foreign Office which communicated the British government's final refusal to give refuge to the former Tsar of Russia. [24] This account brought a storm of denials in Britain and both Lloyd George and Sir George Buchanan contradicted Kerenskii. Lloyd George in his War Memoirs firmly insisted that the asylum offer had always remained open, and quoted the memoirs of Sir George Buchanan, where he stated: 'Our offer remained open and was never withdrawn. If advantage was not taken of it, it was because the Provisional government failed to overcome the opposition of the Soviet'. [25]

At the time of the allegations of Kerenskii, Sir Alfred Knox MP asked the Foreign Office to produce documented facts on the issue. The Foreign Office offered the early cables of asylum offers but, conveniently, did not produce any of the later 'refusal messages'. [26] Meriel Buchanan later 'nailed' this official version by stating in her book that her father had deliberately falsified his memoirs. She stated that after her father had retired from the diplomatic service he had had the intention of including in his book the truth about the question of the admission of the Imperial family to Britain. However, he had decided not to do this because he was instructed by the Foreign Office that if he did

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[22] FO 800/205, File 90. Sir George Buchanan to FO 15.4.1917. PRO.

[23] Summers & Mangold 1976, p. 251.

[24] Kerensky, Alexander. The Road to the Tragedy (La Verite sur le Massacre des Romanovs), p. 118. In Bulygin, Paul. The Murder of the Romanovs. N.Y. 1935.

[25] Summers & Mangold 1976, p. 252; War Memoirs of David Lloyd George, Vol. 1, pp. 971-976; Buchanan, George. My Mission to Russia and Other Diplomatic Memories, Vol. II. London 1923, p. 106.

[26] FO 370/273, File 50, Paper L 50 Sir Alfred Knox to Locker Lampson 20.12.1927 and Lampson to Knox 6.1.1928. PRO. Also early asylum cables in FO 371/2998, File 3743, Paper 62911 and 371/3008, File 61920 are attached.

so he would not only be charged with an infringement of the Official Secrets Act, but would also have his pension stopped. [27]

The question of royal asylum nevertheless remained somewhat separate from the more general question of the admission of 'ordinary' Russian refugees from the Bolshevik regime. Although the King's influence on the government policy in the particular case of the royal family was strong, the policies towards ordinary Russian asylum seekers were dictated by the government and its various departments. It was primarily the Aliens Branch of the Home Office which was ultimately responsible for the admission of aliens and refugees in Britain. The Foreign Office, who was often first approached on the issue by various British consular representatives abroad, normally referred the case to the Home Office. This was done to avoid 'misunderstandings', especially as the Home Secretary, or the immigration officer who was an official and 'advance guard' of the Home Office could still refuse a refugee leave to land in the UK, even if the visa had been granted by British consuls abroad. [28]

It was officially stated by the Home Secretary that as a general rule Russian refugees were not admitted to Britain, save in exceptional cases. [29] From the beginning this policy became the basic principle of the British government, and it was followed throughout the main period of Russian emigration, between 1918 and 1923. All the cases were treated on an individual basis, and strict rules and provisions were set for the entry of individual refugees. The most important requirement, although this alone by no means guaranteed admission, was that the persons admitted were in a position to support themselves and their dependants. Thus, evidence of support from some source was always required.[30]

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[27] Buchanan, Meriel. Dissolution of an Empire. London 1932, pp. 192-93; Summers and Mangold 1976, p. 252.

[28] Dr. A. Goldenweiser. Reports on the legal position of Russian Refugees in various countries: England. 1938, pp. 4-5. Refugee Survey 1937-38. Special Reports, Vol. VI. Refugees and the Law (2). The Royal Institute of International Affairs; Tabori, Paul. The Anatomy of Exile. London 1972, p. 364.

[29] FO 371/3307, File 4790. HO to FO 8.1.1918; FO 371/6871, File 38, Paper N 12655. HO to FO 14.11.1921. PRO.

[30] FO 371/6871, File 38, Paper N 12655. HO to FO 14.11.1921. PRO.

The question of entry of Russian refugees and the rules governing their admission were discussed several times by the Home Office and the Foreign Office. The Home Office clearly wanted to ascertain that there was no confusion about the principles guiding the admission of Russians inside the Foreign Office. In 1921, for example, it was pointed out that the general rule was to refuse admission, with exception of those who had close British personal or, even more important, business connections, previous long domicile in UK, or certain special cases, such as young persons for educational purposes.[31]

In addition, exceptions to the general rule were made for a number of White soldiers who had fought with the British forces in Russia, and their families, as well as for other prominent Russian officials and representatives of former Russian governments. They were also made in favour of 'well-to-do and upper class Russians', especially if they had close British relatives or friends who would support their case. [32] However, these were, as stated, 'exceptions' and it was frequently stated by the Home Secretary that the Home Office considered it necessary to maintain a strict policy in the matter. [33] However, as it will be seen in this chapter, the Home Office itself did not always follow systematically the general rules adopted for the entry of Russian refugees.

In early 1919 a group of 200 refugees were brought to Britain from Riga on a British warship *Princess Margaret*, because of the advance of the Bolsheviks in the area. Why this specific group was brought to Britain despite the guidelines of the Home Office that Russian refugees should not be admitted to Britain, is not clear. Nevertheless, once in Britain their situation soon became quite desperate according to Konstantin Nabokov, the Russian representative in London and Sir George Buchanan, the chairman of the Central Russian Committee (CRC) and the British Russian Relief Committee (BRRC).

Sir George Buchanan sent the Foreign Office two memoranda on the situation of Russians in Britain. The first memorandum was a general report of the Central Russian

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[31] FO 371/6887, File 216, Paper N 12951. Admission of Russians to UK, FO Minute 22.11.1921. PRO.

[32] FO 371/3968, File 176, Paper 28740. Russian refugees. Memorandum on the question of allowing them to enter UK, 21.2.1919; FO 371/4008, File 52089, Paper 65747. FO Minutes, April 1919. PRO.

[33] See for example FO 371/4016, File 66404, Paper 97221. HO to FO 2.7.1919 and HO 45/11549, File 380030/5. HO to FO 1.7.1919. PRO.

Committee on the position of Russian population, the majority of whom consisted of the 'earlier' classes of Russians, mainly Jewish immigrants who had arrived at the turn of the century. The report also considered the effect of the Bolshevik Revolution on the increase in number of 'middle-class and well-to-do Russian refugees' in Britain. This question will, however, be considered in more detail in chapter 6.

In the memorandum Buchanan pointed out that prior to the outbreak of the war, the presence of Russian population, consisting mainly of Jewish refugees from the Russian empire, did not attract public attention, at least before the conclusion of the Anglo-Military Convention in 1917. He continued that at the time of the conclusion of the Anglo-Russian Military Convention a grant was made to be distributed to the wives of those Russians who had elected to return to Russia to serve in the Russian army. The allowance, however, was totally inadequate, as compared with the rise in the cost of living. As a consequence, a United Russian Committee, under the chairmanship of Dr. Jochelman, was established to deal with questions arising out of the Anglo-Military Convention and to represent the interests of these Russians.

In July 1918 a deputation led by Konstantin Nabokov discussed with Sir George Buchanan the unfortunate position of the Russian population in Britain, especially of the families of those Jews that had gone to Russia under the Military Convention. As a consequence of this meeting the Russian Advisory Council, consisting of prominent Russians in Britain, was formed as an auxiliary body to the Central Russian Committee. K. Nabokov, A.M. Onu, the former Russian Consul-General in London, E.E. Gambs, the former Russian vice-consul in London, A.S. Ostrogradskii, the Financial agent of the former Russian government in London and representing the Russian Government Committee at India House, E. S. Liubov, the United Russian Committee, and Mr. I.V. Shklovskii, former correspondent of the Russkie Vedomosti of Moscow, were all members of the Council [34].

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[34] Pares collection, PAR/6/4/1. The tabulation of Russian in England. SSEES.

The Council was to present to the CRC the cases of Russians that it constituted to be deserving of relief, for which it had small sums at their disposal. However, according to Sir George Buchanan the sums were totally inadequate to cope with the size and character of the demand made upon them. The Central Russian Committee itself tried actively to find employment for those recommended by the Advisory Council, but owing to the distrust with which the Russians were regarded in Britain and to the bad employment situation in general, it was stated to be practically impossible. For example the appeal to the public by the British Russian Relief Committee, established in September 1918 for the relief of British and Russian refugees from Russia and of distressed Russian subjects in Britain, met with an unsatisfactory response.

Buchanan stated that the armistice had made a large number of Russians, who had been working in the munitions factories, unemployed with no hope of finding new employment. As a consequence a large number of destitute Russians had asked assistance from the British Russian Relief Committee, which, however, had very limited funds at its disposal. Therefore, Sir George Buchanan was strongly of the opinion that the Treasury should release part of the funds of the Russian Government for the purpose of relief of Russians and for assisting, when possible, their return to Russia. [35] These funds consisted of £50,000, allocated by the Russian Provisional government for the purpose of relieving Russian political emigrants.

The second report of Buchanan was a specific memorandum on the critical situation of 200 Russian refugees brought recently to Britain on *Princess Margaret.* According to Sir George it was impossible for the British Russian Relief Committee to assist these refugees, because it had only very slender funds at its disposal. Therefore, he again suggested that the Treasury would release the whole or part of funds of the former Russian government.

Buchanan also stated that many of these refugees were well-to-do citizens but because of the existing situation their securities were useless. Among the refugees were, for

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[35] FO 371/3989, File 3191, Paper (?). Memorandum No.2 by Sir George Buchanan, 'The Position of Russians in Great Britain'. PRO.

example, Prince Obolenskii and Prince Volkonskii, both of whom possessed vast estates in Russia, which were however of no value at present. [36] Also Baron Alexander Meyendorff, a well-known lawyer and politician and vice-president of the third Russian Duma, was on board *Princess Margaret*. [37] The Meyendorff family belonged to the old Baltic German nobility. Alexander Meyendorff stayed in Britain from 1919 to 1934 (and again from 1939 onwards) and became a well-known expert in Russian history and politics; he was a Reader in Russian Institutions and Economics at the London School of Economics between 1922 and 1934. [38]

As a representative of Russians in Britain, Konstantin Nabokov also approached the Foreign Office to point out the critical situation of the Russian refugees that had arrived to Britain on *Princess Margaret*. The refugees had elected a special deputation and wrote Nabokov a letter, requesting him, as a representative of Russian interests, to support their case before the government. Nabokov stated in his letter to the Foreign Office that these refugees did not have any possibility of obtaining employment and therefore were completely destitute and even facing starvation. Therefore he also urged that the funds of the former Russian government should be released for the relief of these refugees. [39]

The view of Home Secretary Edward Shortt, who had replaced Sir George Cave as Liberal Home Secretary on 10 January 1919, was not very optimistic. According to him it would not be possible for the Home department to take any direct action in the matter. Generally, Shortt was of opinion that a satisfactory solution would be reached only when the whole Russian question had assumed a more normal aspect, but he was also of the opinion that arrangements for the repatriation of as many refugees as possible to the Baltic ports should be encouraged. [40]

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36 FO 371/3989, File 3191, Paper 32691. Memorandum No.1 by Sir George Buchanan 22.2.1919. PRO.

37 The Russian/Russkii zhurnal, vol. 1, no. 16, 28 January 1919.

38 Alexander Meyendorff collection. Introduction and table of contents. Finnish National Archives in Helsinki; Rapp, Helen. Obituary of Alexander Meyendorff (1869-1964). The Slavonic and East European Review, vol. 42, no. 99. June 1964.

39 FO 371/3989, File 3191, Paper 28401. Nabokoff to Sir Ronald 19.2.1919. PRO.

40 FO 371/3989, File 3191, Paper 60505. HO to FO 16.4.1919.

The reply of the Foreign Office to the appeals of Buchanan and Nabokov was also discouraging. The Foreign Office letter to Buchanan stated that the information had been forwarded to the Treasury and the Home Office. However, it was also pointed out that Treasury's reply to the similar appeal of the United Russian Committee on behalf of the destitute families of (Jewish) Russians in England had been negative. Therefore, the Treasury's reaction to the appeal of the Central Russian Committee was likely to be similar. [41] Behind the refusal of the Treasury was the British decision not to dispose of any property or money of the former Imperial Russian government pending recognition of its legal successor. [42]

The Foreign Office also took a very negative attitude to the suggestion of Mr. Hagberg Wright, from the Russian Delegates Committee, that the Committee should send a deputation to the Bolshevik government, with a view to securing assistance. According to the Foreign Secretary, Earl Curzon, this might, however, furnish the Soviets with an opportunity for propaganda. [43] The Delegates Committee had been appointed by the Provisional government to deal with the repatriation of Russians, consisting mainly of the anti-Tsarist Russian political emigrants and the families of those Jewish Russians that had gone to Russia under the Military Convention. [44] As pointed out above, the Provisional government had allocated a certain sum of money for the relief of political refugees, which could be used by the Delegates Committee. This, however, had become impossible after the British government's decision not to dispose of any money belonging to the former Imperial Russian government.

The British Government was nevertheless very keen on solving the problem of the refugees who had to be maintained at public expense. A plan was made to repatriate some of the Russians who had arrived in Britain on the Princess Margaret together with approximately 800 other Russians, among whom were, for example, families of Russians who had returned to Russia under the Military Convention, as well as certain

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41 FO 371/3989, File 3191, Paper 37902. FO to Sir George Buchanan 7.4.1919. PRO.

42 FO 371/8154, File 43, Paper N 1791. Russian refugees, FO Minutes 24.2.1922. PRO.

43 FO 371/3989, File 3191, Paper 24402. FO to HO 12.3.1919. PRO.

44 FO 371/3989, File 3191, Paper 66131. C. Hagberg Wright to FO 29.4.1919.

other undesirables. Director of the Military Intelligence instructed the Foreign Office that it did not have any objections to the refugees brought to Britain on *Princess Margaret*, being repatriated, since having been given asylum in Britain during the Bolshevik occupation of their homes, they were likely to strengthen the elements favouring the Allies, as opposed to the Bolsheviks. [45]

In the meeting of the representatives of the Admiralty, War Office, Foreign Office, Home Office and Colonial Office on 15 May 1919, it was decided that pure Russians could not be sent back under existing conditions because they would not be accepted in Estonia or Latvia. The Home Office should nevertheless ascertain how many Latvians and Estonians could be repatriated. It was decided that the Estonian government should be consulted whether they would allow the repatriation of certain people in the following four categories; those connected with the Russian Delegation Committee; wives and families of Russians who had returned to Russia under the Military Convention; certain 'undesirables', though not Bolshevik sympathisers and certain numbers of destitute seamen.

The meeting concluded that those who could not be landed in Estonia or Latvia, i.e. Russian nationals, could not be repatriated before Petrograd had fallen into the hands of a friendly government. [46] If this rule was followed, pure Russian refugees were never repatriated. However, the Estonian government informed Britain in July 1919 that it was willing to let a number of persons from different categories; families of Russians who returned under Military Service Act, certain undesirables, and also other 'unclassified Russians' to be landed at Reval for transit through Estonia.[47] It is possible that some Russians that were categorised earlier as 'non-repatriable' were included in this agreement.

The meeting of 15 May also addressed the problem of the Black Sea refugees from Odessa and the Crimea. This question had been already considered during the previous

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[45] FO 371/3989, File 3191, Paper 51914. Dir. of Military Intelligence to FO. PRO.

[46] FO 371/3989, File 3191, Paper 76788. HO to FO 20.5.1919; FO 371/4013, File 63588, Paper 78921. Meeting of the representatives of Admiralty, WO, FO, HO, CO, Min. of Shipping 15.5.1919. PRO.

[47] FO 371/3989, File 3191, Paper 97606. Decypher from Mr. Bosanquet (Reval, Estonia) 1.7.1919. PRO.

month, when the Commander-in-Chief of Mediterranean Fleet requested facilities for 237 Russians to proceed to England from Malta. The Foreign Office Minutes had then pointed out that although the rule was not to accept Russian refugees to Britain, exceptions had been nevertheless made in favour of upper class Russians and that there would be trouble if the government did not make any rule one way or another. [48] The view of the Treasury, as expressed in a letter to the Foreign Office, was that on financial grounds it was desirable to repatriate these refugees as soon as possible to parts of Russia that were not occupied by the Bolsheviks. They also considered it important that refugees should not be assisted to come to Britain unless it was clear that they were self-supporting.[49]

At the meeting it was stated that over 2,000 refugees were expected in Malta from the Black Sea. It was agreed that at present it was not possible to send back any of the refugees to the Black Sea, but that on no account should any of these refugees be brought to England. Instead, the Governor of Malta should be asked how many could be employed in Malta and what was the maximum number that could be accommodated. The Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean should also be asked whether accommodation could be found elsewhere, for example in Mudros or Cyprus. Interestingly, the Commander-in-Chief had earlier suggested that refugees should be transported from the Black Sea to Vladivostok. At the meeting it was, however, decided that this would not be possible for practical and financial reasons. [50]

The Governor General of Malta informed the Foreign Office that many destitute Russians had friends in Paris or London who would finance them but they were unable to obtain visas from Military Control Offices in France or England. [51] This again shows the strict attitude the British authorities, primarily the Home Office, had adopted on the question.

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[48] FO 371/4008, File 52089, Paper 65747. FO minutes, April 1919. PRO.

[49] FO 371/4008, File 52089, Paper 74944. Treasury to the FO 16.5.1919. PRO.

[50] FO 371/4013, File 63588, Paper 78921. Meeting of the representatives of Admiralty, WO, FO, HO, CO, Min. of Shipping 15.5.1919. PRO.

[51] FO 371/4022, File 87800, Papers 90170, 101038, 116322. PRO.

In April 1919 G. Volkov, a naval attaché at the former Russian Embassy approached the Foreign Office informing it that Vladimir Nabokov, the brother of Russian Charge d' Affaires, Konstantin Nabokov was in Athens and wished to come to London with his family. The same was true with the head of the Crimean government, M. Salomon Krymm and his family. Mr. Volkov pointed out that he would personally be very grateful if visas were granted to all of them. [52]

The Foreign Office informed Lord Granville, the British representative in Athens, on the same day that there was no objection to granting a visa to Vladimir Nabokov and his family. It was further stated that permission only covered his immediate family and not a large party of relatives. [53] Konstantin Nabokov had also personally approached the Foreign Office on the issue, and they informed on 12 May that Lord Granville had been instructed to grant the necessary visas. [54] The Foreign Office seems to have made the decision before the Home Office had given their view on the issue, because the Home Secretary, Edward Shortt, informed the Foreign Office on 2 July that in his opinion the visas for Mr. Nabokov and Mr. Krymm and their families could not be granted. He explained that due to the large number of applications received by the British government from Russian refugees in Constantinople, Malta and elsewhere it was necessary to maintain a strict policy on the matter.

The Home Secretary continued by referring to the decision of a conference of 15 May 1919 that no further Russian refugees from the Black Sea should be allowed into the United Kingdom, but instead arrangements to take them in Malta should be made. He stated that a strict rule against the admission of Russian refugees at the present time was necessary, and that exceptions could not be made in favour of individuals, no matter how strongly they were recommended or supported, without creating numerous embarrassing situations and giving rise to great dissatisfaction. He continued that the rule would not, however, effect or conflict with the policy of admitting Russians with business or other adequate reasons. [55]

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[52] FO 371/4016, File 66405, Paper 66405. G. Wolkoff to J.D. Gregory, FO 29.4.1919. PRO.
[53] FO 371/4016, File 66405, Paper 71749. FO to Lord Granville, Athens 29.4.1919. PRO.
[54] FO 371/4016, File 66405, Paper 71749. FO to G. Wolkoff 12.5.1919. PRO.
[55] FO 371/4016, File 66404, Paper 97221. HO to FO 2.7.1919. PRO.

Interestingly, this advice seems to have arrived too late for Nabokov's case because in the minutes of the Foreign Office it was stated that Mr. Nabokov was already in England. It was, however, recognised by the Foreign Office that the letter of the Home Secretary gave them 'a definite ruling in these questions' in future. [56] This incident seems to have been one of the infrequent occasions where the Foreign Office made decision to grant visas without waiting for the Home Office opinion. Normally, the Home Office view was asked before permission to grant a visa was given. Presumable in Nabokov's case the Foreign Office assumed that there would be no objections from the side of the Home Office.

Despite the general policy not to admit refugees, a number of prominent Russian émigrés were nevertheless granted visas as 'exceptions to the general rule'. Countess Sofia Benckendorff's case is one example of a successful application. In April 1919 she approached the Foreign Secretary, Earl Curzon, with a list of 28 relatives and friends, as well as their children, altogether perhaps 50 people and requested visas for them to proceed from Malta to UK. [57] In June the Foreign Office informed Mr. Volkov at the Russian Embassy that the War Office had informed them that instructions were to be sent to Passport Control Officer in Malta to grant the visas.[58] In his letter to Countess Benckendorff, Curzon stated that he had been informed that instructions had been sent to the passport officer at Malta to grant the visas required, and regretted the long delay due to the large number of refugees in Malta. [59]

The success of this application was due to a fact that the Home Office, which was naturally consulted in the matter, concurred to the opinion of the War Office that visas could be granted to these people. [60] That the people in question were members of Russian aristocratic and well-known families also most certainly had influence on the decision of the Home Office to grant visas. Among the relatives of Countess Benckendorff were for example Countess Elena Bobrinskaia (sister), as well as her

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[56] FO 371/4016, File 66405, Paper 97221. FO Minutes. PRO

[57] FO 371/4013, File 63577, Paper 63577. Countess Benckendorff to Lord Curzon 25.4.1919. PRO.

[58] FO 371/4013, File 63577, Paper 87326. FO to Monsieur Wolkoff 18.6.1919. PRO.

[59] FO 371/4013, File 63577, Paper 87326. Curzon to Countess Benckendorff 18.6.1919. PRO.

[60] FO 371/4013, File 63577, Paper 87326. Dir. of Military Intelligence to FO 11.6.1919. PRO.

husband Count Andrei Bobrinskii, Countess Elena Benckendorff (daughter-in law), Countess Maria Bobrinskaia and her husband Count Petr Bobrinskii (nephew), Princess Maria Trubetskoi (niece), her husband Iurii Trubetskoi and their daughter Olga, Countess Sofia Fersen (niece), her husband Count Nikolai Fersen and their two daughters, Madame Varvara Kochubei (niece), her husband Nikolai Kochubei and their child, Princess Petr Dolgorukii (wife of nephew) and her two children, and Princesses Sofia (grandniece), Aleksandra and Elizaveta (cousins) Viazemskii. The list of friends included for example Madame Liubov Kochubei and her young children, Princess Maria Obolenskaia, and Countess Palen with her young children. [61]

The Director of Military Intelligence also informed the Foreign Office that they did not have any military objection to the arrival of Mrs. Belaiev and her family, for whom visas were applied through Sir George Buchanan's Central Russian Committee. Visas seemed to have been granted for them, but the Foreign Office was informed that they never reached her. Meanwhile the family had travelled to Genoa with two servants. Fay Morgan & Co., a British company, informed the Foreign Office that they would be very glad if permission could also be granted to servants. [62] In this case a private company in Britain seems to have been backing the applications. In fact important business or other connections in Britain could ease admission and be a sufficient reason for 'an exception to the general rule'. For example, the entry of Isaiah Berlin's family to Britain in 1919 was also probably largely due to important business connections of Isaiah's father, Mendel, as he owned large timber business in Riga and had done trade with Britain. [63]

A visa was also granted for example to Mr. Grigorii Aleksinskii, a former member of the Imperial Duma, and his family; the HO in this case having no objection to granting a visa [64], presumably because of his earlier position. Other important political figures were also admitted to Britain, as shown for example by the cases of Pavel Miliukov and Vladimir Nabokov, although in Nabokov's case permission was given more or less 'accidentally'.

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[61] FO 371/4013, File 63577, Papers 63577 and 87326. PRO.

[62] FO 371/4016, File 66708, Paper 107067. Fay Morgan & Company to FO 23.7.1919. PRO.

[63] Ignatieff, Michael. Isaiah Berlin: A Life. London 1998, pp. 12, 25, 31-32.

[64] FO 372/1262, File 82464, Paper 102755. HO to FO 14.7.1919. PRO.

While in Britain, Nabokov edited the Journal of the Russian Liberation Committee, *The New Russia*, together with his 'Kadet colleague' P. Miliukov. In autumn 1920 Nabokov decided to move to Berlin, where he was to edit the liberal émigré daily *Rul'* until his assassination in 1922. His move was at least partly initiated by fact that while editing *The New Russia*, both Nabokov and Miliukov found their political differences greater than they had anticipated. Miliukov had come to favour a political 'opening to the left', while Nabokov considered this as an unwarranted compromise of Kadet policies. At the time of Nabokov's departure for Berlin, Miliukov also left Britain for Paris, to edit what was to become the most popular émigré newspaper, *The Poslednie Novosti*.[65] The fact that the British government had by then clearly abandoned the anti-Bolshevik cause most probably also influenced their decisions to emigrate.

Also Aleksander Kerenskii was briefly staying in Britain after his escape from Russia. This was not, however, openly discussed in public, probably because of sensitiveness of his position and the antipathy he faced from the majority of Russian émigrés who largely blamed him for what had happened in Russia. In Britain, *The Russian Outlook*, published an article in May 1919, according to which the journal had been informed that Kerenskii had, until recently, been living in retirement somewhere in Britain writing his recollections of what had happened in Russia. The article stated that 'every true and patriotic Russian regarded Kerenskii as being almost solely to blame of the present state of Russia'.[66]

The most famous 'exceptions to a general rule' were without doubt the Dowager Empress of Russia Maria (Marie) Fedorovna, mother of Nikolai II and sister of Britain's Queen Alexandra (queen mother), and her daughter Grand Duchess Ksenia. The Empress Maria Fedorovna, together with her daughters Ksenia and Olga, their husbands Grand Duke Aleksander Mikhailovich, and Colonel Nikolai Kulikovskii, as well as for example, the Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich, the former Supreme Commander of the Russian Army, had moved from Kiev to the Crimea in March 1917. Until August 1917,

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[65] Nabokov, Vladimir. Speak Memory. An Autobiography Revisited. Harmondsworth 1969, p. 197; Williams 1972, pp. 182-84; H.W. Williams Papers, Add. 54466, Vol. XXXI, ff. 37-38. British library, manuscript collection.

[66] The Russian Outlook, No. 4, vol. 1, 31 May 1919.

under the Provisional government, they were free to enter and leave, and the first deprivation of freedom coincided with General Kornilov's campaign in the late August. After the Bolshevik Revolution, the new rulers placed the family under close guard. [67]

In spring 1918 the Germans were advancing in the Crimea and occupied the city of Yalta. In late autumn disturbing rumours of the Bolshevik advance in the Ukraine started to arrive. In October German plans were under way to move the Romanovs out of the Crimea before Bolshevik or Ukrainian nationalist troops could move in. Before these plans were put into effect, however, the Armistice was made and the Germans started to evacuate the peninsula. Their place was taken by the British and French troops which landed in the Crimea in late 1918. [68]

After the arrival of the Allied troops in the Crimea, the Dowager Empress was visited several times by British naval officers, who also brought her letters from her sister in Britain. The officers instructed the Dowager Empress and her family to leave the Crimea, since the Bolsheviks were advancing in South Russia. King George V sent, in April 1919, HMS *Marlborough* to Yalta out of concern for 'Aunt Minnie' and his Russian cousins. This action might well have been advanced by the 'guilty conscience' he may have felt for not helping Nikolai II and his family to leave Russia for Britain during 1917.

The Dowager Empress, of course, was totally unaware of the whole issue of the negotiations of the admission of the Tsar and his family into Britain, as well as of the murder of the royal family in Ekaterinburg. She firmly believed that her son was alive somewhere in Russia; a belief she held until her death [69]. Her determination not to leave Russia was largely due to her belief that it was her duty to remain in Russia with her son. At the beginning of April, however, she was again informed by British officers that there was real danger of the Bolshevik advance in the Crimea, and that she should leave.

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[67] Countess Yekaterina Petrovna Klenmichel in Glenny and Stone 1990, pp. 160-61; Alexander Mikhailovich, Grand Duke. Once a Grand Duke. G.B 1932, pp. 331-337; Vorres, Ian. The Last Grand-Duchess. London 1964, pp. 161-163.

[68] Williams 1972, pp. 75- 76; Countess Kleinmichel in Glenny and Stone 1990, pp. 162-63.

[69] Kurth, Peter. The Lost World of Nicholas and Alexandra. Great Britain and Canada 1995, p. 205; Occleshaw 1993, p. 131.

Finally, the Dowager Empress gave way and agreed to leave on board of HMS *Marlborough*, but only if the British would evacuate all the persons she listed who were also staying in Yalta and neighbouring areas. This was agreed to by the British, and a number of (mainly aristocratic) Russian refugees were evacuated on British vessels and at British expense. The Dowager Empress only gave permission for HMS Marlborough to depart when all the other ships had departed, after which, on 11 April it left Yalta, first for Sevastopol, and then for Malta via Constantinople. [70]

From Malta the Dowager Empress Maria Fedorovna and the Grand Duchess Ksenia, with her five children made their way to Britain on HMS *Lord Nelson*, arriving in Britain in early May 1919. The Foreign Office informed the Home Office that the Empress was due to arrive in Portsmouth on 9 May, and requested that the competent authorities grant Her Majesty, and her suite, all possible facilities for disembarkation. With them sailed some friends and relatives, for example Prince and Princess Viazemskii, Mr. and Mrs. Chatelain with their son, Madame Erschov, Prince Dolgorukii, Princess Dolgorukii with two children, Count and Countess Mengden with their two children. They were also allowed to bring twenty servants with them into the UK. [71]

Empress Maria's other daughter, Olga and her husband, did not accompany them on the journey. They had left the Crimea for Caucasus earlier, although Olga and her family later joined the Empress in Denmark. [72] For a while the Dowager Empress stayed in Britain with her sister, Queen Alexandra, but soon decided to go to Denmark, from where she had originally left to marry Aleksander III. She died in Denmark in 1928 at the age of 81. [73] The Grand-Duchess Ksenia continued to live in Britain until her death in 1960. King George V offered her the use of grace-and favour- mansion, Wilderness House.[74]

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[70] Kurth 1995, p. 205; Vorres 1964, pp. 162-64; Glenny and Stone 1990, pp. 164-66.

[71] HO 45/11549, File 380030/3. FO to HO 3.5.1919 and Tel. from Senior Naval Officer, Malta 25.4.1919. PRO.

[72] Vorres 1964, pp. 163-167.

[73] Tisdall, E.E.P. The Dowager Empress, Marie Fedorovna. London 1957, pp. 255-59; Kurth 1995, p. 205.

[74] King 1994, p. 383

Other well-known Russian individuals and families, such as Anna Pavlova, D.S.Mirskii, Baron A.F. Meyendorff, Golitsyns, Volkovs, Kutaissovs, Trubetskois or Obolenskiis, came to Britain. Some of them only stayed for a short period and then moved on to Paris, Berlin and other more prominent émigré centres. During their stay they nevertheless were respected members of Russian émigré society, which, as Russian colonies elsewhere, preserved much of the structure of old Russia by for example maintaining their former ranks and titles. From the British side, however, there was no 'special treatment' for any 'refugees' once they had arrived in Britain. It was, for example, pointed out that all the members of the former Russian Embassy, once their diplomatic exemption had lapsed, were placed on the register of aliens, and no special treatment was extended to them.[75]

However, although individual well-to-do, upper-class and other prominent Russians were occasionally admitted as 'exceptions to the general rule', there does not seem to have been a clear rule governing their admission. Thus, visas were often denied also to well-to-do refugees with influential friends. Even the Dowager Empress of Russia was refused application for her friends in Malta, about twenty people, whom she wished visas to be granted to UK. Sir A. Davidson informed Sir Ronald Graham in the Foreign Office that the Empress was aware of the restrictions upon the transfer of Russians from Malta to England, but that she hoped that it would be possible to make an exception in these particular instances. The Foreign Office Minutes stated that 'the Home Office would not like this at all, but that the Foreign Office could not do more than put the case up in usual way'. The point was also made that if an exception was made some Labour members would probably ask questions and that on these grounds it might be best to refuse permission.[76]

Davidson approached the Foreign Office a week later in May 1919, informing them that the War Office looked favourably on the request, and that these people were all able to support themselves in England. He also made a comment that the situation regarding the

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[75] FO 372/1721, File 8628, Paper T 9974. From HO to FO 17.8.1921. PRO.

[76] FO 371/4013, File 63588, Paper 76543. Letter from Sir A. Davidson to Sir Ronald Graham, FO 20.5.1919 and FO Minutes. PRO.

applications would most probably ease after this because the Empress and the Grand Duchess Ksenia understood the difficulty of admitting Russian refugees to England in any numbers and no matter what class they were. The Empress was said to be grateful of the consideration shown to them.[77] However, the Home Secretary, Edward Shortt, instructed the Foreign Office that 'he much regretted that permission can not be granted for Russians at Malta asked by Dowager Empress of Russia because it would make it extremely difficult to maintain the rule that had hitherto been strictly enforced'.[78]

As a consequence, Davidson again approached Sir Ronald Graham in the Foreign Office enquiring the reason for the refusal. According to him there was no valid reason for it because all the persons in question had relatives in England, took no part in politics and had money to support themselves. In addition there was no objection from the Admiralty, War Office or Foreign Office, and according to him no intimation had been publicly made that Russians were not allowed to come to England. Graham replied that the admission of aliens to the UK was dealt by Mr. Haldane Porter of the Home Office, and agreed that it would be a good thing for Mr. Davidson to deal with him direct on this and similar questions.[79] There is no further information about this case in either the Foreign Office or the Home Office documents, so it has to be assumed that the original decision of the Home Secretary, not to grant visas, was followed.

It would be interesting to find out why the application of the Dowager Empress was not successful but the application of Countess Benckendorff, for example, was. Even more so because one would assume that the application of the Dowager Empress would have carried at least as much weight, if not more. In addition, some of the people in the two applications were actually the same: Mr. Nicholas Kochubei and his family, as well as Count and Countess Fersen and their children. This clearly makes the policy of the Home Office look rather inconsistent. Thus, the Home Office seems to have made 'exceptions to the general rule' in somewhat desultory method.

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[77] HO 45/11549, File 380030/7. Mr. Davidson to FO 28.5.1919. PRO.

[78] HO 45/11549, File 380030/5. HO to FO 1.7.1919. PRO.

[79] FO 371/4013, File 63588, Paper 99000. Letter from Mr. Davidson to Mr. Graham 8.7.1919 and Mr. Graham to Mr. Davidson 14.7.1919. PRO.

Another very interesting example is the case of Grand Duke Kirill Vladimirovich, the cousin of Tsar Nikolai II, and his wife Grand Duchess Victoria Fedorovna. Grand Duke Kirill was the pretender to the Russian throne and in August 1924 he proclaimed himself the Emperor of all the Russians. For some Russian émigrés, especially for the reactionary group and the members of so called 'Mladorossy', Union of Young Russians, he became the new Emperor of Russia. However, the émigré opinions were divided in this question, and the majority of Russian monarchist émigrés never accepted him as the rightful claimant to the throne. Instead, they supported Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich, the uncle of Grand Duke Kirill, until his death in 1929. Even after Grand Duke Nikolai's death most of the émigrés did not accept Grand Duke Kirill as the rightful claimant to the throne and only recognised him as 'the eldest member of the House of Romanov'.[80]

In the early 1920s the Grand Duke and Duchess wanted to come to live in Britain, but they were refused permission. Sir Stuart Coats made a parliamentary question in March 1921 asking why certain members of Russian Imperial House had been refused permission to reside in Britain, and whether these objections would now be withdrawn. Mr. Shortt replied that he did not know what particular individuals Sir Stuart referred, but that it had been necessary to maintain, with great strictness, the general rule not to admit refugees from Russia.[81] Sir Stuart Coates also approached Cecil Harmsworth at the Foreign Office on this matter. He pointed out that the refusal was ever more surprising because the Grand Duchess was a 'British princess', the daughter of the Duke of Edinburgh.[82]

The Home Office requested the view of the Foreign Office on the case and they replied that the Foreign Secretary Curzon had considered that an exception should be made in favour of their Imperial Highnesses. They also stated that Sir Stuart Coates had been informed that HMG did not wish to raise any objections to their entry. [83] During the1930s the Grand Duke and Duchess nevertheless continued to live in the small

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[80] Huntington 1933, pp. 184-89.

[81] HO 45/11549, File 380030/19. P.Q by Sir Stuart Coats 3.3.1921. PRO.

[82] HO 45/11549, File 380030/20. Stuart Coats to Cecil Harmsworth, FO 8.3.1921. PRO.

[83] HO 45/11549, File 380030/21. FO to HO 14.4.1921. PRO.

village of St. Briac in Brittany, surrounded with the 'court' of their devoted followers [84]. Whether they changed their minds about coming to Britain or whether the British government refused visas despite its promises is not clear.

Mr. Volkov at the former the Russian Embassy personally approached the Home Office several times asking certain émigrés to be admitted. For instance, in April 1919 he asked the Home Office to grant visas for six Russians from South Russia, some of them personally known to him, and some others recommended by well-known Russians, for example Countess Sumarokov-Elston. Her case was recommended by S. Sazonov, the former Foreign Minister of the Tsarist government. [85] Also in this case, despite the fact that these applications were backed by influential persons, the replies seem to have been negative. The Home Secretary informed the Foreign Office that 'in view of the general decision that Russian refugees other than businessmen should not be allowed to come to the UK, he regretted that he did not think facilities should be granted to Countess Sophie Chernikhen-Bezobrazov' who was among the applicants.[86] There are no decisions on the other cases, but the same rule was most probably followed in each case.

The British government also had to deal with Russian refugees who had made their way from North Russia to Finland and other Scandinavian countries. In late 1918 Britain was asked by the Scandinavian governments to take responsibility for some 5,000 refugees who had made their way into Finland, and who could not be maintained in Finland. The British government replied that they could not, except in particular cases, give them hospitality in England. This was done despite the offer from Mr. Denisov to place a million roubles at the disposal of the British authorities for the relief of refugees. The answer of Britain was that 'the difficulty is not financial but it is that the Home Office will not have any more Russians here who might benefit by his generosity'. [87] However, the question was definitely also a financial question because the government wanted to avoid the possibility of becoming responsible for the maintenance of refugees.

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[84] Huntington 1933, p. 34 and 184.

[85] HO 45/11549, File 380030/10. Mr. Wolkoff to Mr. H. Crookshank, FO 16.4.1919. PRO.

[86] HO 45/11549, File 380030/14. HO to FO 7.7.1919. PRO.

[87] FO 371/3307. File 4790, Papers 168045 and 181231. PRO.

The question of the British attitude towards the Russian refugees in Finland was again dealt in early 1919. A telegram from Mr. Clive informed the Foreign Office that there were approximately 13-15,000 Russian refugees in Finland. These refugees had formed a Committee to look after their interests, and it had been supplied by the Finnish government with 500,000 Finnish marks. Mr Clive suggested that Britain should approach the Finnish government to see what steps they would desire Britain to take. The reply from the Foreign Office was that they should not take any action in the matter at present, and that the only way they could come in would be by Mr. Bell, the British representative in Finland, cooperating in giving relief and assistance.[88]

A conference between Sir John Pedder and Mr. Haldane Porter of the Home Office, Major Spencer of the War Office, Mr. Steward of the Treaty Department and a Foreign Office representative, on the question of Russian refugees in Finland and their admission to UK was held in February 1919. The Foreign Office memorandum of the meeting pointed out that, hitherto, permission had been granted in very exceptional cases, such as persons intimately connected with this country, those owing property in England, those likely to be use to the government, or else to some wives and families of Russians who had joined the Allied forces on the Archangel front. [89]

In the memorandum it was pointed out that Major Spencer from the War Office had stated that the matter was one which did not really concern his department. On the other hand, the attitude of Sir John Pedder from the Home Office was that all Russian refugees should remain where they were, and if this could be achieved, the means whereby it was done did not really interest the Home Office. He was also of a view that the admission of people who were likely to carry on monarchist propaganda was undesirable. This is of course quite an interesting view, especially as Britain itself was a monarchy.

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[88] FO 371/3968, File 176, Paper 15559. Telegram from Mr. Clive to FO 26.1.1919. PRO.

[89] FO 371/3968, File 176, Paper 28740. Russian refugees. Memorandum on question of allowing them to enter UK, 21.2.1919. PRO.

On the other hand, it is understandable that the government did not want to receive politically active monarchists, as the British government clearly wanted to distant itself from people carrying propaganda for the Russian monarchy. The collapse of the Tsarist system in Russia had also led to anti-monarchist expressions at home in Britain, which made the issue more sensitive. Pedder continued that he also objected to the admission of people who would be likely to compete with workers in Britain. However, he also pointed out that there would probably be difficulties (moral difficulties?) if persons of means and influence were admitted whilst those without means were left destitute in Scandinavia or driven back to Russia.

The memorandum then considered the advantages and disadvantages of the admission of Russian refugees from Finland into the UK. The advantages would be that the refugees admitted would be grateful towards Britain and that the Scandinavian countries would at the same time be relieved. The disadvantages were that a large proportion were unable to support themselves and most of them were not the 'best elements' but had instead fled in order to save their own skins. Some undesirable persons would then probably be able to enter, too. Additionally it was considered that as soon as the door was opened, at least several thousands would probably make applications for entry.

As different possible solutions it was considered a) that all except undesirables would be admitted (meaning those without sufficient means, criminals?) b) that the British government would maintain their present attitude (not to admit refugees), c) that the subsidies to the Scandinavian countries would be increased, d) that the Allied governments would be consulted to persuade them to help the British government. [90] The documents do not contain any decisions on the issue, but considering the general line of government's policy on the refugee question there is little doubt that the option to maintain the present attitude was chosen as the best course.

The evacuation of Russian refugees from North Russia and especially the question of how many Russians were brought to Britain had been the subject of much controversial and conflicting information. The report by Rawlinson, the Commander-In-Chief in

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[90] FO 371/3968, File 176, Paper 28740. Russian refugees. Memorandum on... PRO.

North Russia, stated that only 200 civilians were taken from Archangel to England, and the rest were taken to the Baltics and South Russia. [91] On the other hand, there are also statements pointing out that the refugees from North Russia were the largest single group that came to Britain, approximately 15,000. [92]

Sir John Simpson, in his *Refugee Problem* (1939) stated that very few Russian refugees entered Great Britain after the war and that the only single large group coming to Britain after 1917 were those evacuated in British ships from Murmansk after the fall of the popular government in Archangel. His estimate was that, at one time, there were probably about 15,000 refugees in all, but the greater part of them were assisted with funds raised for the purpose to emigrate to France, the Balkans and the elsewhere in 1922-23. [93] Marc Raeff and Claudena Skran simply state that 15,000 Russians were evacuated directly from North Russia to Britain [94], but their information is based upon Simpson's study.

There is some uncertainty by what Simpson means with the 'fall of the popular government'. Most probably he is referring to the evacuation of the British forces and the evacuation of some Russians that coincided with it, in autumn 1919. The actual fall of the Archangel government happened in February 1920. [95] All the British ships, however, had left Murmansk by October 1919 and thus could not be involved with any evacuations in the following February.

In fact the final fall of the Archangel government happened very quickly, thereby preventing any organised evacuation of troops or civilians. In early February the successful Bolshevik offensive on the Dvina front caused panic in Archangel. In the middle of February most of the officers left Archangel in the direction of Onega and Finland. On 18-19 February the remainder of the North Russian government evacuated Archangel and General Miller left from Murmansk by sea, first to Norway and later to

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91 WO 33/975, File 3717. The Commander-In-Chief, North Russia to WO 4.10.1919. PRO.

92 See for example Simpson 1939, p. 339; Skran 1995, p. 36; Marrus 1985, p. 149; Raeff 1990, p. 28.

93 Simpson 1939, p. 339.

94 Raeff 1990, p. 28; Skran 1995, p. 36.

95 Strakhovsky 1944, p. 252.

Britain. [96] He soon emigrated to France, where he disappeared in 1936, allegedly kidnapped by Soviet agents. [97] Many others, however, never managed to leave North Russia. The British attitude towards the whole issue can be seen in a message stating: 'there is nothing we can do. Miller was given a chance of going to Murmansk and of evacuating all who wanted and he refused'. [98]

This does not, however, mean that the British had planned to evacuate refugees from Russia to England. The telegram of Rawlinson, the Commander-in Chief of North Russia, enquired in August 1919 whether certain Russian families who had either relations in England or direct business connections with England could be sent to Britain, provided that they could show proofs of being able to maintain themselves. The War Office telegram to Archangel stated clearly that 'in no circumstances can Russians be received in England '. It was also informed that the Home Office view was that the destination of these Russians should be 'anywhere but England '. [99]

The letter of Under Secretary of the State for the Home Department to the Director of Military Intelligence on 2 September stated that no definite decision could be given as to whether any refugees with connections to England should be granted admission to the UK. The Home Office could not provide either accommodation or maintenance for a large number of refugees. Thus a telegram had been despatched to the Military authorities in North Russia saying that in no circumstances could refugees be received in Britain. The Home Secretary was strongly of the opinion that all possible ships should be taken to transfer Russians who wish to leave Archangel by direct sea route to other ports of Russia. [100] Considering the strictness of the message to the authorities in North Russia, the more accurate statement would have probably been that the Home Office was not willing to provide accommodation or maintenance ' to any number of refugees '.

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96 WO 106/1183. Fall of the North Russian government. Report from the East Finland Mission, March-May 1920. PRO.

97 Silverlight 1970, p. 352.

98 WO 32/5709. Situation in Archangel 13.2.1920. Report by R. Steel. PRO.

99 FO 371/4029, File 124546. Telegram respecting refugees from North Russia 14.8.1919 and 3.9.1919. PRO.

100 FO 371/4029, File 124546. Copy of the letter of the Under Secretary of the State for the Home department to the Director of the Military Intelligence, 2.9.1919. PRO.

The proposal of the Secretary of the State for War, Winston Churchill, was to repatriate these civilians to Southern Russia. This was also the recommendation Curzon and that of the Foreign Office in general. [101] The War Office telegram to General Ironside stated that at the conference held between the representatives of the Home Office, Foreign Office and the Ministry of Shipping it was decided that all Russian civilians would be sent to South Russia when evacuated from North Russia and would not be allowed to land in the UK unless passed at the port of call by Home Office officials. The remainder would be accommodated on board ships bringing them to UK ports until re-embarkation on vessels proceeding to South Russia. [102] The C-in-C of North Russia was informed that civilians should not leave North Russia under the impression that they were going anywhere but South Russia.[103]

In the light of currently-available documents it is reasonably clear that, contrary to earlier suggestions, the number of Russians evacuated from North Russia to Britain never reached more than a few hundred. The fact that the figure 15,000 is repeated in many studies is partly due to the fact that they have merely repeated the figures given in older studies, for example that of Simpson. Originally, the mistake might have happened because of several reasons; because of the marked difference between the estimations and the actual evacuation numbers; because of the uncertainty about the destination of the evacuated refugees, and so on. For example, General Rawlinson replied to the War Office enquiry about the earlier estimation of General Officer Commanding, i.e. that of 15,000 refugees, that this estimation had included refugees that were to be taken to Murmansk. The refusal of General Miller to evacuate his troops to Murmansk, however, reduced the figures. In addition, as Rawlinson stated, the number of Russians that were evacuated from Archangel was also less than had been originally estimated.[104]

The most difficult refugee problems were still ahead; the final fall of the Archangel government, the defeat of Denikin's army and finally the evacuation of Vrangel's refugees. British policy in relation to the admission of refugees remained, for the most

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101 FO 371/ 4029, File 124546, Papers 126913 and 127720. PRO.

102 WO 33/967A. File 346/A. From WO to General Officer Commanding, Archangel 11.9.1919. PRO.

103 FO 371/4029, File 124546, Paper 127720. Minutes of the Meeting at the Ministry of Shipping 9.9.1919. PRO.

104 WO 33/975, File 3717 (G.C. 189). Commander-In-Chief, North Russia to WO, 4.10.1919. PRO.

part, unaltered. A letter of General Miller of the 23 March 1920, written in the refugee camp in Norway, where part Miller's troops had managed to escape after the fall of Archangel, critically requested reasons for the refusal of the British government to allow few hundred refugees to enter Britain. He stated that human laws are imperfect but in England the laws of honour and humanity always stood far above any other laws. He continued that these few hundred Russians who in Soviet Russia would be threatened with imprisonment and execution could not believe that laws will prevent the English people 'fulfilling now a small part of what they considered their direct duty in the autumn of 1919 '. [105] The Russian representative in Britain, Evgenii Sablin, also considered it to be a moral responsibility of the British to take care of these refugees. [106]

Surprisingly, in this case, the efforts of Mr. Sablin and Miller seemed to have helped, because on 30 March the statement was made by the Foreign Office that 'on further consideration Lord Curzon is disposed to recommend the Home Secretary that an exception should be made in this particular instance '. What might have helped was the fact the Miller had stated that he had sufficient funds at his disposal to ensure the maintenance of these refugees for a considerable period.[107] The letter from the Foreign Office to Mr. Sablin stated that they had received a reply from the Home Office that 'as an exception to the general rule, they were willing to agree to Lord Curzon's suggestion that 200 refugees now in Norway may be permitted to enter this country '. However, the Foreign Office pointed out to Sablin that they should be let know whether Russian authorities were prepared to assume full financial responsibility for the maintenance and transport, because the British government could not use any public funds for this purpose.[108] The agreement was also made on the understanding that these people would not stay in Britain indefinitely.

The defeat of Denikin's army had most influence on the British government, because it took responsibility of over 10,000 refugees involved with the evacuations of the spring

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[105] Lloyd George papers, F 58/1/7. Miller to Lloyd George 23.3.1920. House of Lords Record Office.

[106] Lloyd George papers, F 58/1/7. G. Sabline to J.D Gregory ,FO, 20.3.1920. House of Lords Record Office.

[107] Lloyd George papers, F 58/1/7. J.D. Gregory to the Under Secretary of the State 30.3.1920. House of Lords Record Office

[108] FO 371/4050, File 183221, Paper 197735. FO to Sabline 19.5.1920.

1920. The attitude and policies towards admitting refugees to Britain, however, did not change. In early 1920, when the defeat of Denikin's army was already a fact, Samuel Hoare, from the Foreign Office, considered the question of the future of the 'would-be-refugees'. He said that in Archangel the British had removed about 7,000 persons to South Russia, but that the situation was then different because there was still hope of a Bolshevik collapse. In his opinion, Britain should do what they could to assist those who could escape to foreign countries but he did not think that emigration from South Russia should be encouraged 'en masse'. He pointed out the difference between helping people to escape and helping those who had escaped, and considered that it would be better to confine British efforts to the latter. [109]

Sir Halford Mackinder, the British High Commissioner in South Russia who had guaranteed the British evacuation of Denikin's forces and families, approached the Foreign Office on 13 January asking if refugees with sufficient means to maintain themselves could come to England. The answer of the Foreign Office was: ' We must consult the Home Office. We cannot possibly allow Russians into this country that have no means at all '. [110] Curzon approached the Home Office on the question, with a view that it was quite impracticable to admit destitute refugees. The reply of the Home Office was that Mr. Shortt 'regretted that he could not see his way to admit any refugees, with or without means to England'.[111]

Interestingly, there nevertheless seem to have been some conflicts between the Foreign Office and the Home Office in relation to the admission of refugees to Britain. Emrys Evans from the Foreign Office approached Mr. Hoare in October 1920 complaining about the attitude of the Home Office in refusing all the applications they were making for Russians to enter England. According to him it was particularly short-sighted in the case of refugees in the camps at present under British control because of the enormous expense they made for the government and, therefore, it would be wise to encourage those refugees who could, to leave the camps. He also stated that the number of Russian

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[109] FO 371/4013, File 63588, Paper 167526. Refugees from South Russia, extracts from the departmental file South Russia. 5.1.1920. PRO.

[110] FO 371/4013, File 63588, Paper 173286. Sir Halford Mackinder to FO 23.1.1920. PRO.

[111] FO 371/4013, File 63588, Paper 179643. HO to FO 17.2.1920. PRO.

refugees likely to find asylum in England would, in all probability, be comparatively small but that in all cases where proper accommodation and maintenance in Britain was guaranteed, the Home Office should grant the necessary applications.[112]

The Home Office replied in late October, stating that the cases mentioned 'did not differ from large numbers of applications received from other sources, which were, as a general rule, in accordance with the decisions of the Cabinet, refused '. [113] Actually, the question of the admission of Russian refugees was not dealt with at the Cabinet level even once during the whole period of the refugee problem. This clearly implies that the matter was not considered of major political importance, or as an issue of major controversy. The Foreign Office by no means supported unrestricted admission of Russian refugees, either. They merely seem to have suggested a somewhat more flexible practice towards individual cases, especially towards those who could properly support themselves.

More importantly, even if there were certain disagreements between the Foreign Office and the Home Office about the rules of admission, at least they did not have any impact on the attitude or policy of the Home Office, which had the ultimate power on the issue. Of course, the position of the Home Office on the issue was quite different from that of the Foreign Office. Thus, it was easier for the Foreign Office to adopt more 'benevolent' attitude towards the admission of refugees, as after their arrival in Britain, the refugees were the responsibility of the Home Office.

The Home Office nevertheless maintained a strict policy also in this particular case. The Home Secretary also pointed out that in no case was any recommendation being made by the Foreign Office, except that in one case reconsideration was asked. [114] The whole question was related to seven individuals whom the Foreign Office had asked permission for admission to Britain, pleading the fact that they could provide for themselves. After the refusal of the Home Office, the Foreign Office could, however, do

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[112] FO 371/4057, File 204610, Paper 214546. Emrys Evans to Mr. Hoare 2.10.1920. PRO.
[113] FO 371/5419. File 29, Paper N 3432. HO to FO 27.11.1920. PRO.
[114] Ibid.

little in the matter. The Minutes of the Foreign Office were marked with a peculiar statement of Emrys Evans: ' I do not think we need to pursue the matter, for it is clear that if you press a case, they will "let the people go".'[115]

In fact the Foreign Office had earlier approached the Home Office. In February 1919 a Foreign Office letter to the Home Office enquired if the future policy of the Home Office was not to grant facilities for Russians to come to Britain for residence, even if nothing was known to be held against the applicants and they were in possession of private means to support themselves. In the letter it was pointed out that it would seem preferable if these refugees could spend their unearned income in Britain rather than somewhere else. The Minutes of the Foreign Office pointed out that it might also be desirable to encourage Russians who were experts in trades that were little known in Britain to be allowed to come to Britain.

The Home Office reply by Haldane Porter, dealing with the admission of aliens at the Aliens' Branch of the HO, was that in dealing with the Russian cases they have had to be guided to some extent also by public sentiment. Mr. Porter pointed out that 'he was afraid that the public sentiment at present was not very friendly to the settling of Russian refugees in this country '. At the Foreign Office this comment was marked with a note that they did not know where Mr. Porter had got this impression because these people would not be competitors in labour market. Mr. Porter, however, continued that in his opinion the argument that it would be better for well-to-do Russians to spend their money in England than abroad would not carry much weight. [116]

To some extent Porter's comments were justified because economic problems and especially the high unemployment did not make the British public sympathetic to the plight of refugees. In this kind of situation the fact that those refugees that would be admitted to Britain were supposed to be able to support themselves might, indeed, not have carried much weight. The 'public apathy' to the plight of the refugees could be

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[115] FO 371/5419, File 29, Paper N 3432. FO Minutes. PRO.

[116] FO 372/1258, File 3246, Papers 13844 and 24888. FO to Mr. Haldane Porter, HO, 4.2.1919 and Mr. Haldane Porter to FO 12.2.1919. PRO.

seen also in the outcome of the appeals made for example by the British Committee of the Russian Red Cross and the British-Russian Relief Committee. Both of these organisations had made appeals to the British public for the assistance of Russian refugees, but these appeals met with an unsatisfactory response. [117]

Although the war-weariness and growth of unemployment largely explains the lack of sympathy for Russian refugees [118], it was probably also linked to general anti-alien feelings of the British society that had further increased as a consequence of the war. As already pointed out, stricter immigration legislation in the form of the 1914 and 1919 Acts had been passed because of the increased anti-alien attitude among British politicians and public. The passing of these immigration controls was also clearly linked to both economic, social and political developments and international turbulence of the inter-war years, from which Britain could not isolate herself. [119] In a situation of 'declining national confidence' the Home Office, on its part, was determined to interpret the existing immigration legislation in an 'unforgiving' manner.

At the level of politics, the question of entry of Russian refugees and the existing immigration control legislation provides quite an interesting case more generally. During 1919 the opposition to the Aliens Act of 1919 had only come from the side of the Labour members of the Parliament, against the Conservatives and some Liberals who had strongly supported the passing of the Act. Despite the general sympathy of the Labour Party with the immigrants, its duty was nevertheless to look after the interests of the British workers. Therefore it was also bound to be concerned about any competition in the labour markets that might worsen the already gloomy employment situation.

In addition, and this might have been at least as important reason, for political reasons the Labour party was hardly sympathetic to admission of Russian refugees to Britain, either. They had strongly opposed the British participation and support for the White

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[117] Lloyd George papers, F 45/10/4. Arthur Stanley, British Red Cross, to Lloyd George, 2.2.1920; FO 371/3989, File 3191. Memorandum No. 2 by Sir George Buchanan. PRO.

[118] Wilson, Fransesca M. They Came As Strangers. The Story of Refugees to Great Britain. London 1959, pp. 217-18.

[119] Holmes 1988, p. 116.

forces in the Civil War, and the question of admission of Russian refugees was linked to this. In the eyes of the Labour Party these people did not constitute ordinary refugees but rather well-to-do and right-wing émigrés. Therefore, the Labour Party, which normally would have been sympathetic to the plight of refugees, did not have similar sympathies with Russian refugees from the Bolshevik regime.

The control of aliens' entry also produced several parliamentary questions from the Labour members of the Parliament. In August 1921 Mr. Chadwick asked the Home Secretary whether, in view of unemployment and also of the increasing exodus from Russia, the Home Office was exercising care in restricting destitute alien immigration. The Home Secretary's answer to the question was that they were carefully restricting immigration.[120] Mr. Jesson asked a parliamentary question in November 1921 of possibility of the amending the Aliens Restriction Act of 1919. He expressed the view that there was a lot of discontent among sections of workers who were being thrown out of employment by foreigners, through the failure of the Aliens Restriction Act. Home Secretary Shortt replied that all aliens coming to the UK to take up employment had to be in possession of a Ministry of Labour permit, and that aliens who came without this permit were refused landing. He did not think the difficulty would, therefore, be removed with any amendments to the existing Aliens Act.[121]

The Conservatives, on the other hand, had strongly supported the passing of the 1919 Aliens Restriction Act. The Liberals, even though they had earlier been the strongest 'pro-aliens' had by the time of the passing of the 1919 Act also changed their policies. In the Coalition government, in power until 1922, these two parties held the main ministries and continued to administer the Act in a strict manner, even towards 'White' Russians [122] whom they had supported in the Civil War. Whether these strict policies towards admission of refugees were enforced 'to avoid having Labour ask questions ', or whether it was due to actually providing a very useful justification for a strict immigration policy, is difficult to tell. It is also difficult to measure the level of

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[120] FO 372/1661, File 10038, Paper T 10038. P.Q. by Sir Burton Chadwick 17.8.1921. PRO.

[121] FO 372/1636, File 86, Paper T 13910. P.Q by Mr. Jesson 10.11.1921. PRO.

[122] On the use of term 'white', see footnote 125.

influence the Soviet government had in the matter, especially in view of the issue of trade.

The basic rules for the entry of Russian refugees to Britain nevertheless remained unaltered during the main period of Russian emigration, which lasted up to 1923. From 1922 onwards the Soviet authorities began to severely restrict emigration. Soon legal emigration from Russia had become virtually impossible; only a few individual defectors occasionally managing to find their way to the West.

The Foreign Office approached Mr. G. Volkov at the former Russian Embassy in London, to confirm the rules in relation to the entry of Russians into Britain, because there still seemed to be some doubt on the part of the Embassy on the policy. The Foreign Office letter on 23 July 1919 stated that in the Foreign Office it was understood from the Home Office instructions that while Russian refugees could not be admitted to England 'as such', they would not, however, as a rule be denied admission if they had some good reason for coming to Britain, as for example important business connections or the education of their children. The letter continued that it was hoped that this information would be useful to the Embassy in shifting the applications which it received on behalf of the refugees.[123]

Although the former Russian Embassy in London ceased to have any official status after the Bolshevik Revolution, it nevertheless continued to function unofficially as a representative of Russians in Britain. It, for example, gave recommendations of Russians wishing to enter Britain. This, of course, did not mean that British government was in any way obliged to follow the recommendations of the Embassy. Mr. Volkov had also informed the Foreign Office already in the spring 1919 that the Russian Embassy in London, and Konstantin Nabokov as the Russian *Charge d'Affaires* in particular, were placed in considerable difficulty as regards recommending Russians who wanted to come to Britain. Therefore, Volkov suggested that it would be better if Russians abroad were to apply through their own representative, who would then refer the application to British minister on the spot. This proposition was accepted by the FO,

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[123] FO 372/1263, File 103184. FO to Mr. Wolkoff, Russian Embassy 23.7.1919. PRO.

and it was decided that British Ministers abroad would be informed accordingly. [124] The Russian Embassy, nevertheless, continued to receive applications from Russians, and they continued approaching the Foreign Office and Home Office with these applications, as well as giving personal recommendations in certain cases.

The conference held at the Foreign Office in November 1921, including the representatives of the Foreign Office, the Home Office, the Passport Control, the British Mission to Moscow and the Department of Overseas Trade clarified the conditions under which the Russians 'not connected with the Soviet Trade Delegation', i.e. 'White' Russian refugees from the Bolshevik regime [125], were admitted to Britain. The general rule was to refuse admission with exception of those who had either British connections, genuine trade interests, previous long domicile in Britain or in certain very special cases, for example young persons for education. [126]

In 1923 it was introduced that instead of having different rules for 'Red' and 'White' Russians, i.e. the Soviet citizens and the 'White Russian refugees', all applications by Russians should be divided into applications under the Trade Agreement and applications for personal reasons. The granting of visas under the Trade Agreement was to be decided by an informal committee of the representatives of the Foreign Office, the Home Office and the Passport Control Office. Those outside the agreement were to be dealt exclusively by the Home Office, except in special cases when the Foreign Office was requested to give its views. The Foreign Office Minute of 8 August 1923, stated that so far the majority of the Russians admitted to UK had been 'White' Russians. The rules of entry had been that admission could be granted without reference to London to bona fide businessmen, to the officials of recognised Russian government, to children under 16 for education and to regular Russian residents in the UK. [127]

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[124] FO 371/4008, File 52089. W. H Selby to FO 1.4.1919. PRO.

[125] The term White Russian refugees refers to all those who were refugees from the Bolshevik regime, i.e. were anti-Bolshevik, not only those directly connected with the White armies.

[126] FO 371/6887, File 216, Paper N 12951. Admission of Russians to UK, FO Minute 22.11.1921. PRO.

[127] FO 371/9331, File 9, Paper N 6794. FO Minute 8.8.1923. PRO.

The suggestion of unifying the practice of admission of Russians to Britain seems to have been adopted. Thus, the Foreign Office memorandum of 6 December 1923 stated that the applications were divided into trading applications, decided by informal Interdepartmental Committee, and personal applications, decided by the Home Office. The memorandum pointed out that before agreeing to admit a Russian, the Home Office desired to be satisfied that the person was not undesirable neither personally, nor politically, that he would not become a charge upon public funds and that unless as Ministry of Labour permit had been obtained, that they were not likely to enter the British labour market at any time.

The memorandum further stressed that even if the above conditions were fulfilled, the mere desire to enter was not sufficient, and that special grounds existed to justify an exception to the general rule. Categories for 'favourable treatment' for admission were, for example, those having close British connections and/or strong humanitarian grounds, women to marry a British subject, those being of 'advantage to British interests', or children for educational purposes. As before, it was stated that for employment purposes Russians were accepted only in exceptional circumstances.[128] Thus, the rules governing the admission were very similar to the earlier practices.

In the light of these considerations, the entry of Russian refugees and the policies of British authorities were to a great extent guided by the existing immigration legislation, which endowed the Home Office with considerable powers over the entry of aliens. These policies were also facilitated by the fact that unlike the Aliens Act of 1905, the Aliens Restriction Acts of 1914 and 1919 did not contain statutory recognition of the right of asylum for political refugees. This question had proved to be a controversial issue especially at the time of the passing of the 1919 Act. The absence of a statutory recognition was justified by an assurance from the Home Secretary, Edward Shortt, that any 'decent political refugee' would be admitted to Britain, even if there were no special clause for this in the law. However, the policies of the British government in relation to the admission of Russian refugees clearly show that this principle was not followed.

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[128] FO 371/9331, File 9, Paper N 9529. FO Memorandum 6.12.1923. PRO.

Thus, the absence of a 'right of asylum' clause enabled the government to treat 'political' and non-political immigration as one and effectively ignore the difference.

In relation to the expulsion of refugees, the British government, nevertheless, adopted at least seemingly more liberal and 'humane' set of policies. The reply of the government to the questionnaire of the Nansen International Office [129] stated that it was not customary to expel stateless persons resident in the United Kingdom, and that the Home Secretary had never resorted to the deportation of stateless aliens resident in the United Kingdom. [130] The practices of, for example, the French government were clearly different as they expelled several hundred Russian refugees, particularly as a consequence of the economic crisis in the early 1930s [131]. On the other hand, one should of course note that the number of Russian refugees in France was substantially higher in the first place.

Besides, the British government's statement that it did not expel refugees should be questioned on a number of events, even if this was true in the case of 'White' Russian refugees. The government clearly used different policies towards, for example, families of those Russian who had left Britain for Russia under the Anglo- Russian Military Convention. Since the government refused to readmit their husbands to Britain, these families were forced to accept the 'offer' of repatriation. It is very clear that these people were not deported because they were considered not 'conducive to the public good', or for other similar reasons, but simply because they had to be supported by public funds. The British authorities could naturally justify this policy by the fact that these people were not strictly speaking 'stateless' aliens. On the other hand the Soviet officials clearly questioned their responsibility for allowing back those refugees that were born outside the borders of Soviet Russia, especially on a view that the Western governments refused to recognise the Soviet government [132].

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[129] The Nansen Office was established by the League of Nations in 1930, after the death of Fridtjof Nansen, who had been appointed the High Commissioner for Russian Refugees by the League in 1921. The Nansen International Office continued the important work carried out by Nansen in the refugee field. The question of the international assistance for Russian refugees will be dealt with in more detail in chapter 5.

[130] Simpson 1939, p. 258; Bentwich, pp. 4-5. Refugee Survey 1937-38, Vol V. Refugees and the Law (1). Royal Institute of International Affairs.

[131] Simpson 1939, pp. 252-253.

[132] FO 371/5431, File 65, Paper N 3070. Mr. E.F. Wise to Mr. Gregory 22.11.1920. PRO.

Evaluating the British government policy in relation to the admission of Russian refugees to Britain as a whole, it is clear that strict policies were adopted from the beginning. It was officially stated by the Home Secretary that as a general rule Russian refugees were not admitted to Britain, save in exceptional cases.[133] Generally speaking, any alien wishing to enter Britain had to be able to satisfy the Aliens Officer that he had adequate reasons for coming to Britain and that it was otherwise desirable that he should be admitted. [134] And as Sir George Cave, the then Home Secretary, had stated already in 1917, the Russian refugees by and large were unlikely to be of any (economic) value to Britain. [135]

Strict rules and provisions were set for the entry of individual refugees. An important requirement for entry, though by no means sufficient in itself, was that the person was in a position to support himself and his dependants. [136] This was the basic principle of British policies towards all aliens, and the comment of Emrys Evans from Foreign Office clarifies the situation in relation to the Russian refugees. In his statement in July 1921 he pointed out that there were no Russian refugees in Britain being provided for from public funds. [137] The Home Secretary, Edward Shortt further clarified the rule by stating that evidence of support from some source had to be always produced, either by the refugee himself, or possibly by some sponsor in Britain, who would promise to look after the refugee financially. [138]

This requirement of sufficient means had been present already in the Aliens Act of 1905, and it was listed carefully in the subsequent legislation, especially in the Aliens Order of 1920. Similarly, the Aliens Order also required that if an alien desired to enter employment, he had to have a written permit issued by the Ministry of Labour. The Home Secretary, Edward Shortt, had instructed already in 1919 that 'under existing conditions aliens should not have facilities to come to England for the purpose of

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133 FO 371/3307, File 4790. HO to FO 8.1.1918; FO 371/6871, File 38, Paper N 12655. HO to FO 14.11.1921. PRO.

134 FO 372/1262, File 74855, Paper 81955. HO to FO 29.5.1919. PRO.

135 FO 371/3020, File 241424. HO to FO 21.12.1917. PRO.

136 FO 372/1262, File 74855, Paper 81955. HO to FO 29.5.1919. PRO.

137 FO 371/6867, File 38, Paper N 7768. Russian refugees at Malta. 6.7.1921. PRO.

138 FO 371/6871, File 38, Paper N 12655. HO to FO 14.11.1921. PRO.

employment' [139] and this view was maintained in future. Thus, it was also a common practice that a special condition that the alien could not accept employment was added to the residence permit. [140].

As already pointed out, exceptions were nevertheless made especially in certain trades and businesses where a person could be of advantage to Britain, for example towards well-to-do businessmen. Also, if successful businesses or individual employers in Britain backed application, a work permit could be issued. Interestingly, the British law was actually more favourable than those of most continental countries in that aliens could work in several liberal professions, such as doctors, barristers and architects; there being no restrictions in favour of British citizens. This was not the case for example in France, where aliens were disqualified for example from being lawyers or doctors. [141]

Reality was somewhat different also in Britain. The provision of sufficient means for support was aimed at preventing the possibility of a refugee becoming a charge upon public funds, as well as becoming a competitor in the labour markets. Also, if any employer wished to employ an alien he had to show that the post was necessary and could not be filled by any British subject, as well as that the wages and conditions were not less favourable than those given to British employees. Aliens were normally given a residence permit for a short period, not exceeding a year. This could then be renewed for further periods of a year or less. However, normally it was only after the alien had established himself in some employment or profession that an unconditional permit to reside was granted. [142] It was also stated that after residence of several years the conditions attached to the residence permit in relation to employment were normally cancelled [143].

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[139] FO 372/1262, File 74855, Paper 81955. HO to FO 29.5.1919. (Statement of Home Secretary Edward Shortt). PRO.

[140] Simpson 1939, pp. 268-69.

[141] Bentwich, pp. 5-8. Refugee Survey 1937-38, Vol. V. Refugees and the Law (1); Raeff 1990, pp. 37-38.

[142] Bentwich, p. 5. Refugee Survey 1937-38, Vol. V. Refugees and the Law (1). Royal Institute of International Affairs.

[143] Simpson 1939, p. 269.

There is not information on how much money a person had to have in order to 'qualify' for the entry. Some refugees were excluded from the requirement of being able to support themselves if they had close relatives or friends who promised to support them, or if there were very strong humanitarian grounds for admission. The latter reason could be taken into account for example in the case of Russians that had been supporting the Allied cause in Russia [144]. Also women who married British subjects could be admitted more easily. As pointed out earlier, exceptions for individual well-to-do, upper-class and prominent Russians, especially those with strong British connections were made throughout the period of Russian emigration.

Exceptions were also made on educational grounds. However, permissions were in most cases granted only for children and not their parents. At this point, it is nevertheless important to mention the activity of certain individuals and committees that aimed at helping Russian refugees especially in the field of education. In this, the work of Educational Sub-Committee of the Central Russian Committee and the active work of Sir Bernard Pares, deserves a special mention. One important aim of the Committee was to collect funds for the education of Russian refugees, and to persuade British universities to offer free places for Russian émigré children.

As an outcome of this work, universities such as Oxford and Cambridge expressed their willingness to admit Russians without charge, or at least at a considerable reduction. Another organisation that worked actively in the field of educational assistance of Russians was the Russian Academic Group in Great Britain. Initially it consisted of some twenty academics, many of whom were actively representing the Russian community in various organisations.[145] What is of course important to notice is the fact that these organisations could work only within the limits of the government regulations and policy. They could not, for example, overcome rules set on the admission of refugees to Britain.

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144 I.e. White soldiers who were fighting with the British forces in Russia.

145 Pares collection, PAR/7/1/1. Russian Academic Group in Great Britain. SSEES; Stow Hill (Soskice) papers, Box 5, R.A.G/1. Russian Acadmic Group in G.B. House of Lords Record Office; FO 371/4029, File 125746. Report of the Central Russian Committee, May 1918- September 1919. PRO.

Finally, the question of government policy towards Russian refugees can be considered in relation to the numbers admitted to Britain. The question of the total number of Russian refugees in Britain is clearly a problem to which none of the available sources give a definite answer. Several modern studies give estimates that in the early 1920s there were around 15,000 Russian refugees in Britain. This information, however, is probably due to the false belief that Britain evacuated almost 15,000 refugees from North Russia to England. [146]

More importantly, in the early 1920s several League of Nations documents also stated that the number of Russian refugees in Britain was 15,000. The figures presented for Britain in the League's statistics were, however, only estimates, since there were no statistics kept in Britain on the subject. In November 1921 the League advised Britain, among the other member states, to take a census of Russian refugees in British possessions as well as in the United Kingdom. It was advised that the census should be taken of the refugees that were maintained at the public expense and of those who had no reasonable prospect of finding employment. [147]

In their reply to the League of Nations the British government stated that there was no official record in Britain of the number of persons who could be classed as refugees.[148] The Home Secretary Edward Shortt clarified in his letter to the Foreign Office that as a general rule no Russian refugees were admitted to the UK. For a long time past the number of visas authorised in the case of Russians had been about 20 a month. The Home Secretary continued that even though practically all these visas had been granted to Russians who had been obliged to flee from Russia and who consequently might be termed 'refugees' the visas were granted not because they were refugees but for a variety of reasons, for example having British relations who would look after them or having close business connections.

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[146] See for example Marrus 1985, p. 149, Raeff 1990, p. 28, Skran 1995, p. 36.

[147] FO 371/6871, File 38, Paper N 12375. Mr. Frick, League of Nations, to FO 3.11.1921. PRO.

[148] FO 371/6871, File 38, Paper N 12980. Secretary to the Cabinet to the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs 23.11.1921. PRO.

According to the Home Office, the total number of Russians in the UK in September 1921 was 93,259. [149] Because of the size of the figure, it must certainly have also included the Jewish immigrants who had arrived in Britain in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This raises a more general question about who were defined as 'Russians'. The census of population for England and Wales in 1921 listed 49,360 persons as born in Russia. This figure, however, also included Finland. In addition, 35,536 persons were listed as born in Poland. It was further stated that in the censuses of 1901 and 1911 the figures for Poland referred to the area then described as Russian Poland. [150] This was the area from which the majority of the Jewish immigrants had arrived in Britain in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and which at the time of the census of 1921 was not a part of the Russian empire any more.

Because of the lack of systematic classifying of the foreign-born population, especially as regards the areas and countries whose boundaries changed after the war, it is probable that for example the birthplaces of Jewish immigrants were not always classified systematically. By nationality they were, however, commonly counted as Russians and were often referred as the largest group of 'Russians' in Britain still in the 1920s. In the census of 1921 the number of people classified under the category 'Russian group' in the whole Great Britain was given as 92,588. It was further explained that this group consisted of those born in Russia, Poland, Finland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.[151] Thus, the Home Office figure, presented to the League of Nations in the end of 1921, merely quoted the census figure, without stating that this figure also included other than 'pure Russian' nationalities. In any case, the total number of 'Russians' in Britain told very little about the number of Russian refugees from the Bolshevik regime, which was the interest behind the League's enquiry, and of which there were no records available in Britain.

In March 1921, the Home Secretary answered a parliamentary question made by Mr. G. Doyle on how many Russians and other aliens had entered Britain for residence during

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149 FO 371/6871, File 38, Paper N 12655. HO to the FO 14.11.1921. PRO.

150 Census of England and Wales, 1921. General Report, p. 154. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1927.

151 Carrier, N.H and Jeffrey, J.R. External Migration. A Study of the Available Statistics 1815-1950. London 1953, pp. 67-68, 155.

the last 12 months. Mr. Shortt stated that it was impossible to tell the exact number, but he estimated that perhaps some 300 Russians had entered Britain.[152] Again, this statement hardly supports the estimate of the total of 15,000 refugees in Britain, presented in the League of Nations documents. The fact that Home Secretary's estimate was for the year 1920, during which the emigration from Russia was at its height, is also very significant.

Doctor G. Lodygenskii from the Russian Red Cross Societies in Geneva wrote a memorandum on Russian refugees for the League of Nations in early 1921. In this he estimated that there were 15,000 Russian refugees in Britain. [153] The League of Nations's general statement on the question of the disposal of Russian refugees in August of the same year concluded that it was difficult to obtain the exact figures from each country. However, the number of Russian refugees in Britain was again stated as 15,000. [154] Mr. A. Maudslay of the British Committee of the Russian Red Cross forwarded to the Foreign Office a copy of the statement of the distribution of Russian refugees in European countries in January 1921 that had been received from American sources. This likewise gave a figure of 15,000 for Britain. Even more surprising, however, was the comment of Emrys Evans put down in the Foreign Office Minutes: 'I feel certain that we have more than 15,000 refugees here'.[155] Considering the very strict government policy of not allowing any refugees in Britain, the comment is quite unexpected.

Dr. Izjumov, who studied the Russian archives in Prague in the 1930s, estimated that in January 1922 there were 8,000-10,000 Russian refugees in Britain. He produced his own figures for Russian emigration in each country at the beginning of the 1922, as opposed to earlier statistics that were considered too high. These figures were published

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[152] FO 371/8170, File 123, Paper N 2304. Parliamentary question by Mr. Doyle 9.3.1921. PRO.

[153] FO 371/6865, File 38, Paper N 2499. Memoranda by Dr. G. Lodygensky, 14.2.1921. PRO.

[154] FO 371/6869, File 38, Paper N 9990. League of Nations statement on the question of disposal of refugees 27.8.1921. PRO.

[155] FO 371/6863, File 38, Paper N 323. Distribution of Russian refugees in various European countries (comment of Evans in the FO Minutes, 10.1.1921). PRO.

in Simpson's refugee study in 1939. [156] Judged by the British policies, this estimate is probably closer to the truth than 15,000.

In 1930 the Sub-Committee of Private Organisations for Refugees [157] produced some statistics on Russian emigration. They estimated the number of Russian refugees in Britain to be 4,000.[158] Interestingly, also the League of Nations documents from 1924 already state that there were about 4,000 refugees in Britain at that time. This was an estimate supplied by refugee organisations in Britain. [159] The decrease in numbers from the early figures of 1920s could of course be partly explained by the fact that there was a movement of Russian émigrés between different countries during the whole of the 1920s. In Britain's case the Russian emigration was directed at the continent. Simpson estimated that there were about four to five thousand refugees left in Britain in the late 1930s, because the greater part of the refugees had been assisted to emigrate to France, the Balkans and elsewhere. [160]

However, the main problem with the 15,000 figure is that there is nothing in the official documents that would support the assumption that Britain admitted even 15,000 Russian refugees, although this figure is actually small. Judged by a strict policy of the British authorities in admitting refugees this figure is quite questionable. All the cases were considered carefully and on an individual basis and there is no information about any large groups of Russian refugees arriving in Britain.

Considering this, one has to conclude that the number of Russian refugees in Britain was probably less than 10,000 in the first place, and the number fell further through onward emigration. It is possible that the figure 15,000 included refugees maintained by Britain in refugee camps such as those in Egypt, Lemnos and Cyprus. For example the memorandum of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the Cabinet in May 1920 stated

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156 Simpson 1939, p. 68, 82, 339.

157 The Committee was attached to the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees, established under the auspices of the League of Nations. The question of the League's assistance for refugees will be dealt with in more detail in the next chapter.

158 Simpson 1939, pp. 108-09.

159 FO 371/10468, File 17, Paper N 7383. Report of Nansen presented to the Council of League in June 1924. PRO.

160 Simpson 1939, p. 339.

that 'as far as the government departments in London were aware, the number of Russian refugees in British territory or care appeared to be about 16,000'. [161] Additionally, the memorandum of the British government, submitted to the Conference on Russian refugees in August 1921, only provided information on refugees that were maintained by Britain in various camps. On the other hand, the comment of Emrys Evans in 1921: 'I feel certain that we have more than 15,000 refugees here' seems to refer only to the British Isles.

What has to be acknowledged, though, is that even if there is no absolute certainty of the number of Russian refugees in Britain in the early 1920s, a distinctive Russian émigré community nevertheless existed in Britain. This community, despite its smallness also had its own special features compared, for example, with some larger Russian émigré communities in Europe.

4.2. Refugees Maintained in the Balkans and Mediterranean

The only group of Russian refugees that the British took direct responsibility for were some families of General Denikin's officers to whom the British officers in South Russia had guaranteed assistance. At the Foreign Office conference on the evacuation of South Russian refugees on 20 February 1920 it was stated that the guarantee of Mr. Lowdon, to evacuate refugees from Odessa had already been carried on so far as possible. The most important question at the moment was the fate of Denikin's refugees that fell under Sir Halford Mackinder's guarantee. The possible destinations for these refugees were considered to be Salonika, Romania, Lemnos and Cyprus. [162]

The officer administering the government of Cyprus informed the Foreign Office that the main difficulties for the use of Cyprus were housing and food shortages on the

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[161] CAB 24/105, C.P. 1206. Memorandum by the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the Cabinet 3.5.1920. PRO.
[162] FO 371/4013, File 63588, Paper N 181052. Conference on evacuation of South Russian refugees, 20.2.1920. PRO.

island, and because of that no more than 150 refugees could be taken. On the other hand, if the Turkish prisoners of war could be moved from Cyprus, about 1,000 refugees could be accommodated. [163] The arrangements were made to repatriate Turkish prisoners from Cyprus later in March in order to replace them with Russian refugees. Admiral de Robeck and General Miller took actions in Lemnos in order to form refugee camps for the Russians because Egypt and Greece refused to receive further refugees.[164]

In the end several thousands of refugees were transported to the refugee camps maintained by the British and located on the islands of Prinkipo and Lemnos in the Aegean Sea and also in Cyprus and Egypt. About 1,000 sick and wounded were evacuated to the Allied hospital in Salonica. The Russian medical personnel were in charge of the hospital, but they were supervised by a British army medical Corps Officer. [165]

In addition there were some 800-1000 refugees at Basra in Mesopotamia, part of the remnants of Denikin's Volunteer Fleet [166], and about 70 refugees in Malta, as well as around 200 refugees in Antigoni [167] who were also maintained at British expense. The Foreign Office did not seem to have had any exact information about the refugees in Malta before July 1921, when the War Office sent them a report on these refugees. In most of the statistics on refugees maintained by the British government those in Malta were not mentioned. These refugees had arrived before the guarantee of Mackinder, i.e. during the earlier evacuation of Odessa in 1919, and therefore the Foreign Office felt that it was unreasonable that they should go on indefinitely providing for these people. The best solution was considered to be to concentrate these refugees in the camp in Egypt.[168] Additionally, at the end of 1921, a plan was made to transfer some of the refugees in Malta to Cyprus. [169] The plans seem to have been carried out, since in

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163 FO 371/4013, File 63588, Paper N 182270. Telegram from the Officer Administering the Government of Cyprus to FO 15.2.1920. PRO.

164 FO 371/4013, File 63588, Papers N 185465 and N 187426, 14.3.1920 and 22.3.1920. PRO.

165 WO 33/1000, File 5932. General Headquarters, Constantinople to WO 16.4.1920. PRO.

166 FO 371/6866, File 38, Paper N 4997. FO Minute on Interdepartmental meeting on refugees at Basrah 23.4.1921. PRO.

167 FO 371/6865, File 38, Paper N 1887. FO to Treasury 18.2.1921. PRO.

168 FO 371/6867, File 38, Paper N 7768. WO to FO 6.7.1921. PRO.

169 FO 371/6871, File 38, Paper N 12209. Tel. from Mr. Scott, Cairo 2.11.1921. PRO.

November 1921 it was stated that there were only 14 refugees left in Malta, mostly old ladies.[170] The Antigoni refugees were transferred to the camp at Tuzla, near Constantinple, in March 1921.[171]

In July 1920 the High Commissioner in Constantinople stated that the total number of Russian refugees under British control was slightly under 10,000. They were distributed accordingly: in Prinkipo 2,150, in Lemnos 2,840, in Cyprus 1,343 and in Egypt 3,520.[172] At highest point the British government was maintaining almost 11,000 refugees at the cost of £56,300 per month in summer 1920. [173] After this the number gradually declined, as the refugees were dispersed to European countries and back to the Crimea and Constantinople, some of who joined Vrangel's forces.

The latter option could not, however, be publicly encouraged by the British government, since it had not recognised Vrangel'. However, the War Office seems to have been very keen on using this option in order to get rid of some of the refugees under British control. They approached the Foreign Office asking reasons for the instructions by the High Commissioner in Constantinople that no facilities should be afforded to any Russian refugees joining Vrangel's army. They referred to the cost of refugee camps and pointed out that any means of reducing the number of refugees was an advantage to the British government.[174] As a consequence, the Foreign Office sent the High Commissioner a telegraph pointing out that even though the British government were not bound to give facilities for the return of Russians to General Vrangel's army, the refugees did not need to be prevented from returning to South Russia if they wished to do so.[175]

The Foreign Secretary, Earl Curzon, was of the opinion that refugees could be repatriated to the Crimea if Vrangel' would guarantee that they would not be employed

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[170] FO 371/6872, File 38, Paper N 13128. CO to FO 28.11.1921. PRO.

[171] FO 371/6865, File 38, Paper N 3221. Tel. from Sir H. Rumbold, Constantinople to FO 13.3.1921. PRO.

[172] FO 371/4015, File 63588, Paper N 210299. Admiral de Robeck to FO 24.7.1920. PRO.

[173] FO 371/4014, File 63588, Paper N 204778. Decypher from Admiral de Robeck to FO 17.6.1920. PRO.

[174] FO 371/4014, File 63588, Paper N 208586. WO to FO 16.7.1920. PRO.

[175] FO 371/4015, File 63588, Paper N 209750. FO telegram to High Commissioner in Constantinople 1.8.1920. PRO.

against Soviet Russia. The War Office, on the other hand, stated that Vrangel' would have a justification in refusing a guarantee, which would increase the amount of 'useless mouths' in the area. Therefore they considered that there was a strong possibility that all these refugees would remain indefinitely at British expense, and no opportunity should be missed of exploring every other possible means for the disposal of the refugees.[176] A decypher from Admiral de Robeck in Constantinople had stated already in June that Vrangel' was not able to take women and children back to the Crimea.[177] Of course, in a few months time the situation changed dramatically, with the final defeat of Vrangel's army and the huge refugee problem it caused. Thus, the option of repatriating any refugees to the 'White' Crimea was gone for good.

During the summer 1920 refugees in Prinkipo were transferred to Lemnos.[178] The camp in Lemnos was not, however, in a much better condition to accept them. The report in May 1920 stated that the staff in the camp had worked hard but they did not have much experience. The sanitary arrangements in the camp were described as disgraceful, and the camps themselves too close together. The only bright spot in the organisation of the camp were the hospitals that were admirably organised, but unfortunately they had not avoided typhus, measles and other illnesses in the camp. The biggest problem would be the winter, and how to provide clothing and accommodation for the refugees if they were to stay in camp during the winter. In the report it was, nevertheless, clearly pointed out that this was not the best solution, but that it would be better to send refugees onto Malta where the conditions were better and food would be easier to supply. [179] These instructions were not, however, put into effect, perhaps because the transfer would have brought additional costs, or because there were objections to their transfer from the side of the authorities in Malta.

The British government was given invaluable help in the camps by the British Committee of the Russian Red Cross (BCRRC) during 1920 and 1921. BCRRC was an

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176 FO 371/4014, File 63588, Paper N 215155. WO to FO 25.9.1920. PRO.

177 FO 371/4015, File 63588, Paper N 210044. Decypher from Admiral de Robeck 29.6.1920. PRO.

178 FO 371/6870, File 38, Paper N 11135. Russian refugees. Memorandum from the British government to the Conference at Geneva on 22-24.8.1921. PRO.

179 FO 371/4015, File 63588, Paper N 209882. Report on the Russian refugee camp in Mudros 25.5.1920. PRO.

entirely British organisation. It was pointed out by the FO that the Committee was a separate organisation from the Russian Red Cross, and should not be confused with it. It was further stated that the Russian Red Cross itself consisted largely of the representatives of 'the old regime', who would also use their position to further the aims of their own particular party. Instead, the British Committee of the Russian Red Cross, as a British organisation, had done excellent work in close conjunction with the Foreign Office. [180]

The work of the BCRRC consisted mainly of supplying refugees with clothing and boots, medical supplies, food and milk, and other necessities.[181] The British government provided some funds for the Committee in order to facilitate their work in Egypt, Lemnos and other places. The funds given for this work came mainly through the reallocation of the remaining £50,000 of General Denikin's 'last packet'. These funds were not, however, sufficient for the amount of work that was needed in the camps, and it was constantly urged by the Committee that financial assistance was needed from the government. In the late 1920, Mr. A. Maudslay, the president of the Committee, requested assistance from the Foreign Office, pointing out that they were in urgent need of funds. He stated that if the organisation was provided with £50,000 they would be able to carry on for another six months, but if no further money was forthcoming, they would have to close down at the end of the year. [182]

At the meeting of the Finance Committee of the BCRRC in November 1920, the resolution was passed that due to the recent development with the evacuation of General Vrangel's forces, the refugee problem was ever more urgent and an immediate decision was needed from the British government in regard of help of the BCRRC. In his letter to the Foreign Office, Mr. Maudslay stated that the Committee also begged to draw to the government's attention the distressing situation of Russian refugees in England, who, owing to the low state of the finances of the Committee, were not receiving their

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[180] FO 371/5448, File 4208, Paper N 4208. J.D. Gregory, FO to Mr. Kidston 20.12.1920; FO 371/6868, File 38, Paper N 8945. FO to Sir Basil 12.8.1921. PRO.

[181] FO 371/4015, File 63588, Paper 213123. The BCRRC activities in Lemnos, Egypt and Cyprus 26.8.1920. PRO.

[182] FO 371/5419. File 29, Paper N 3187. Emrys Evans on the British Committee of the Russian Red Cross 18.11.1920. PRO.

allowances. This probably referred particularly to the families of those Russians who had left Britain under the Anglo-Military Convention, whose situation had become more urgent after the decision of the Treasury to withdraw their support at the end of March 1920. The view of the Foreign Office, as expressed by Emrys Evans, was that the British government were doing their best, but the Committee 'won't be patient'.[183]

From the very beginning of the 'refugee problem' the government made it clear that it had, at no time, agreed to the maintenance of Russian refugees for an indefinite period. As it was pointed out by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the fact was, however, that these refugees were in the hands of the British, and that they could not be left to starve.[184]

In the summer of 1920 a solution to the problem was thought to be found by the establishment of the Russian Refugee Committee, an initiative of Evgenii Sablin at the Russian Embassy. The aim of this Committee was to assume the entire responsibility for the maintenance and organisation of the refugees evacuated from South Russia. [185] The president of the Committee was Count Ignatiev, and among its members were Sablin, Baron Rausch, the delegate of the Russian Red Cross Society and A. Maudslay, the president of the British Committee of the Russian Red Cross. In July they informed the Foreign Office that the Committee had been duly constituted and it would take over the responsibility for the maintenance and settlement of all Russian refugees maintained by the British government. All future expenditure of these refugees was to be undertaken by the Committee. This undertaking was given on the understanding that the Treasury would assist in raising funds to the amount of £500,000 from certain credit balances of different departments of the Russian Provisional government, i.e. funds belonging to the late Russian Embassy. [186]

The Treasury, however, stated that it would not be possible to release this money because it belonged to the legal successor of the former government and at present there

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183 FO 371/5419, File 29, Paper N 3396. Mr. Maudslay to FO 19.11.1920, and the comment of Emrys Evans. PRO.
184 CAB 24/105, C.P 1206. Memorandum by the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the Cabinet 3.5.1920. PRO
185 FO 371/4014, File 63588, Paper N 193082. Treasury to FO 20.4.1920. PRO.
186 FO 371/4014, File 63588, Paper N 208157. Sabline to FO 10.7.1920. PRO.

was no Russian government recognised by Great Britain.[187] The British government had itself considered the possibility of using the funds of the former Russian government for the maintenance of the refugees under British control. This money consisted of approximately £5 million, which were looked after by Messrs. Baring Brothers. After careful consideration it was, however, decided that this money could not be touched. [188] When hearing of the decision Sablin stated that this information placed their Committee in a totally different position.[189] At the Russian Refugees Conference at the Treasury on 20 July 1920 Sablin further clarified that in the absence of funds the Refugee Committee would be unable to assist the government in any way. The conference agreed that at the moment it would be impracticable to send refugees back to the Crimea, but that it might be possible that Serbia would accept them if financial assistance were given. Mr. Sablin said that his Committee would send two representatives to Serbia to examine conditions for that.[190]

Negotiations with the Yugoslav government were started in the autumn of 1920. The aim of the negotiations was to come to an agreement on the transfer of all refugees under British control to Serbia. The Serbian government informed the Foreign Office of the conditions for receiving refugees. Their plan was to establish a new Russian colony with 9,000 refugees from the British camps, and they informed the Foreign Office that both the old colony in Serbia and the future new one would need to be under direction of the existing Serbo-Russian Committee. The sum paid by the British government should not be less than £60,000 per month in advance, although there is no information about the period it would cover. In addition the government required £120,000 as a first instalment. [191]

An agreement was reached in October on the condition that the British would pay for the maintenance of the refugees on their arrival. Because the camp in Lemnos was

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[187] FO 371/4014, File 63588, Paper 208157. Meeting at Treasury 21.7.1920. PRO.

[188] FO 371/6869, File 38, Paper N 9653. Russian refugees. Memorandum by Emrys Evans for the Conference at Geneva in August 1921. PRO. The report is also presented in the Journal of the League of Nations, November 1921.

[189] FO 371/4014, File 63588, Paper 208157. Meeting at Treasury 21.7.1920. PRO.

[190] FO 371/4015, File 63588, Paper N 209449. Conference on Russian Refugees at Treasury 20.7.1920. PRO.

[191] FO 371/4015, File 63588, Paper N 214718. Decypher from Sir A. Young, Belgrade 15.9.1920. PRO.

considered unsuitable for winter accommodation refugees from that camp were transferred to Serbia first. Their transfer was completed at the beginning of November. The timing of the operation was both successful and unsuccessful because it happened just before the final defeat of General Vrangel' in the Crimea. The French government appealed to the Serbian government to accept some of the refugees that were congesting Constantinople in the aftermath of the evacuation. Therefore the Serbian government requested the British government to postpone the transfer of refugees from Egypt and Cyprus. The British, no matter how eager they were to carry out the rest of the agreement, did not have much choice but to accept the request. [192]

The BCRRC, which had assisted in the evacuation of refugees from Lemnos to Serbia started refugee assistance in Serbia, as well as continuing to assist the remaining refugees in Egypt and Cyprus.[193] The situation, however, remained very difficult and in early 1921 the Treasury asked the Foreign Office's view of the grant to the BCRRC.[194] The Foreign Office were of the opinion that a grant of £1,500 a month should be given to the BCRRC for three months beginning on 1 March for their work in Egypt and Cyprus. Meanwhile, negotiations with the Serbian government for the early transfer of the remaining refugees were in progress and the Foreign Secretary pointed out that the BCRRC should be informed that as soon as the refugees leave Egypt and Cyprus, the proposed grant would cease.[195]

In early 1921 the Yugoslav government informed Britain that they were prepared to receive the remainder of the refugees in the camps. The arrangements were being made for their transfer until the Yugoslav government suddenly said that the transfer of the refugees would not be convenient for them at that time. The British government then asked if the Yugoslav government would be willing to admit these refugees on the payment of a lump sum of money. Negotiations on the issue were started and they continued the whole year, however, without success. The British government was very anxious to end its responsibilities for the refugees, and more and more irritated about the

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[192] FO 371/6870, File 38, Paper N 11574. Memorandum by Evans 19.10.1921. PRO.
[193] FO 371/5419, File 29, Paper N 3187. Emrys Evans on the BCRRC 18.11.1920. PRO.
[194] FO 371/6864, File 38, Paper N 1202. Treasury to FO 21.1.1921. PRO.
[195] FO 371/6865, File 38, Paper N 1887. FO to Treasury 18.2.1921. PRO.

actions of the Serbian government. In June the Yugoslav government agreed to admit 3,500 of Vrangel's refugees to Serbia. The British government asked them to admit the refugees in Egypt and Cyprus at the same time, but the request failed. Instead, the British were asked to postpone the matter again. [196] The situation looked increasingly difficult, especially since the government had ended its grant to the BCRRC already in the summer. Because of this the Committee had been compelled to finish its work both in Egypt and Serbia.[197]

A further stimulation for the British government's eagerness to end its responsibility for the remaining refugees was the British public opinion which was against cost of maintenance at the expense of the British taxpayer and opposition from the Labour Party. Several parliamentary questions were made to the government during the period that Britain was maintaining Russian refugees in camps and in Serbia. In December 1920, Sir. J.D. Rees questioned the Foreign Secretary on how long it was proposed that the British tax-payer should continue to be responsible for the maintenance of Russian refugees. The reply of the Foreign Office was that the government had not yet fixed a time limit for responsibility but that it was hoped that the arrangements with the Yugoslav government could be concluded in near future. Meanwhile, it was stated, other measures to deal with the refugees were receiving careful attention. [198]

On the other hand some MPs were sympathetic to the plight of the refugees and suggested that Britain should do more for them. In April 1920, Colonel Newman asked the Prime Minister whether he was aware that large numbers of middle class Russians had been driven to South Russia and were in danger of being massacred. He also asked if the government would despatch a sufficient number of ships to the Black Sea to bring these unfortunate people away. Mr. Bonar Law answered that it was materially impossible to evacuate and maintain an appreciably greater number than those who had already been moved. The British government felt that the Volunteer Army held a

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196 FO 371/6870, File 38, Paper N 11574. Memorandum by Evans 19.10.1921. PRO.

197 FO 371/6868, File 38, Paper N 8806. Mr. Strang, Belgrade, to FO 31.7.1921; FO 371/6869, File 38, Paper N 9674. Mr. Scott, Cairo, to FO 10.8.1921. PRO.

198 FO 371/5419, File 29, Paper N 4633. P.Q by Sir J.D. Rees 20.12.1920. PRO.

defensive position in the Crimea, and the government did not consider it justified in acting on a suggestion made by Colonel Newman.[199]

For the 'opposition' Sir J. Rees continued to push the government. In early June 1921 he asked about the cost of refugee camps and the possible closing of them. The government replied that it was attempting to find a solution to the refugee question, apart from the possibility of repatriation, in which it was under negotiation with the Soviet government. Repatriation would not be, however, possible for all refugees as some would not be accepted by the Soviets and some did not want to return. [200] On 20 June Rees again addressed the government with a view that the British should announce that within the month these refugees, like others, would have to take care of themselves. [201] Additionally, on the same day Captain Viscount Curzon asked a parliamentary question about he maintenance of refugees by the British government.[202]

Sir J. Rees repeated his question in October asking for the total sum that had been expended on Russian refugees, and when that expenditure would finally cease. The reply was provided by Mr. Edward Wood, instructing that 4,827 Russian refugees were being maintained by the British at the moment at the monthly cost of £21,970. The British government was, however, confident that it was possible to make some other arrangements to provide for these refugees apart from maintaining them at public expense. [203]

The Daily Herald, a leftwing newspaper published an article on the cost of Russian refugees in the camps. It informed its readers that more money was paid to the unemployed Russian 'Whites' than to the British unemployed. It further commented that 'the crime of the British unemployed was to be only British people of the working

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[199] FO 371/4014, File 63588, Paper N 193426. P.Q. by Colonel Newman 21.4.1920. PRO.
[200] FO 371/6867, File 38, Paper N 6467. P.Q by Sir J.D. Rees 1.6.1921. PRO.
[201] FO 371/6867, File 38, Paper N 7197. P.Q by Sir J.D. Rees 20.6.1921. PRO.
[202] FO 371/6867, File 38, Paper N 7197. P.Q by Capt. Curzon 20.6.1921. PRO.
[203] FO 371/6870, File 38, Paper N 11980. P.Q by Mr. J.D. Rees 24.10.1921. PRO.

class, but the virtue of the Russia refugees in Egypt and Cyprus was to belong to the old capitalist regime'. [204]

The secretary of the National 'Hands Off Russia' Committee, W.P. Coates, also approached C.R. Buxton, the Labour MP, in March 1923. He pointed out that the British government could have avoided the current refugee problem if it had come to an agreement with the Soviet government in the winter of 1919. According to him, the Soviet representative, Leonid Krasin, had also made a proposal on behalf of the refugees in June 1921, and had the British government accepted that proposal the refugee problem would have been quickly reduced. According to Mr. Coates the fear of the Foreign Office that there was a danger of refugees being mal-treated after they had returned to Russia was not well-founded. At the end of the letter Mr. Coates presented the figures on the cost of British maintenance of White Russian refugees, as well as pointing out that the payment received by the unemployed British worker was much smaller than the payment received by a Russian refugee in a camp. [205]

The issue of the money spent on maintenance of Russian refugees caused much resentment among British workers and led to the criticism of the government. Mr. G. A. Shortt, for example, addressed the Prime Minister with a call for 'fair play and a living wage for the British workers, instead of providing for Russian families'. [206]

Meanwhile the government continued to negotiate with the Yugoslav government on the payment of a lump sum in exchange for taking full responsibility for all the remaining refugees under British control. The British government stated that during the year 1920, the total expense of the refugees had been nearly £1,000,000. [207] Even though the total number of refugees maintained by the British had decreased to under 5,000 by August 1921, consisting of about 2,000 refugees in Egypt, 600 in Cyprus, 2,000 in Serbia, 187

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[204] FO 371/8155, File 43, Paper N 3040. Extracts from Daily Herald 29.3.1922. PRO.

[205] Buxton, Charles Rhoden, 897/2: Letter from Mr. Coates to Mr. Buxton relating to the Expenditure of Czarist refugees. Misc 897, BLPES Archives.

[206] FO 371/8155, File 43, Paper N 3255. Mr. G.A. Shortt to the Prime Minister 29.3.1922. PRO.

[207] League of Nations. Official Journal. November 1921, pp. 1012-1018. Memorandum from the British government.

in Tuzla and 60 in Malta [208], in 1921 the government was still spending at least £20, 000 a month for the maintenance of these refugees. [209]

The government considered that even the option of merely transporting the refugees to Serbia and paying their maintenance there, without the final liquidation of British responsibilities, would have been cheaper than maintaining them in the camps. Mr. Maudslay of the British Committee of the Russian Red Cross estimated that if refugees were transported from Egypt to Yugoslavia, almost half of the expenses of the Committee would be saved [210]. The monthly cost of 2,800 refugees in Serbia was about £2,200, while the cost of those slightly less than 3,000 refugees in Egypt and Cyprus was about £16,000 a month.[211] This was probably because it was more expensive to provide these camps with food and other supplies than in Serbia.

However, no matter how eager the British government was to end its responsibilities towards these refugees, negotiations with the Yugoslav government did not lead to an agreement. Sir A. Young, the British representative in Yugoslavia, sent a telegram to the Foreign Office stating new Yugoslav conditions for receiving the refugees in Serbia. They asked for British government to pay 600 dinars per head monthly and 5 million dinars for expenses at reception. The Foreign Office Minutes show that these payments were considered far too high. They stated that the telegram showed that the Yugoslav government had not realised that the British were determined to have a settlement of this question, and that the Yugoslav proposals could only be described as dishonest. The Foreign Office suggested that they should refuse to pay more than 400 dinars per head. Also the proposal that the refugees from Lemnos should be maintained by the British as long as they remained on Serbian territory was against an earlier agreement. Moreover, the Foreign Office considered the request for 5 million dinars on reception of the refugees as absurd. [212]

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[208] ibid.

[209] FO 371/6867, File 38, Paper N 6497. P. Q by Sir. J.D. Rees 1.6.1921. PRO.

[210] FO 371/6868, File 38, Paper N 8044. Mr. Maudslay to Mr. Evans 9.7.1921. PRO.

[211] FO 371/6872, File 38, Paper N 13157. FO to the Treasury 9.12.1921. PRO.

[212] FO 371/6872, File 38, Paper N 13309. Tel. from Sir A. Young, Belgrade 3.12.1921. PRO.

At the same time as the negotiations with the Serbian government were taking place, the British were also negotiating an agreement with the Soviet government on the basis of a general amnesty for refugees, which would enable their repatriation to Russia. Negotiations on this were started with the Soviet government during 1921. [213] However, these negotiations did not progress very smoothly either. Emrys Evans from the Foreign Office pointed out already in May 1921 that the Bolsheviks would probably object to the return of some of the people under British control. [214]

The most important obstacle that prevented the British and the Soviets coming to an agreement were their different views on the 'preliminary measures' required in order to facilitate the repatriation. M. Litvinov, earlier the Soviet representative in Britain and now the Deputy Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the Soviet government, informed the British government in early June that the Soviet government was prepared to receive back those Russian refugees at present in camps or living in a state of destitution outside Russia 'who were willing to become good Russian citizens loyal to the existing government'. On the other hand, Litvinov pointed out that certain conditions had to be stipulated, dictated by economic and political necessities. The Soviet government was, for example, unable to undertake the transportation of the persons to be repatriated. Precautions against the inclusion of 'counter-revolutionary agents' also needed to be taken, and therefore the Soviet government required that their 'representative commissions' would be allowed to visit the camps to collect information in regard to those who wished to return.[215]

It is unclear whether it was only those terms which the British considered impossible to accept, or whether there were also other reasons. The Soviet government itself did not seem to be very consistent in its views. In August 1921, G.V. Chicherin, the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, stated that no reply had been received from London on the question of the representative commission, which was considered an indispensable condition for the re-admission of refugees. However, it seems that the government soon

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213 FO 371/6867, File 38, Paper N 7462. FO Minute 24.6.1921. PRO.

214 FO 371/6867, File 38, Paper N 6497. Evans' comment 25.5.1921. PRO.

215 Phillip Noel-Baker papers 4/607 b. Letter from M. Litvinoff 6.8.1921.

changed its opinion on the repatriation issue. This can be seen in the statement of Chicherin, according to which the Soviets were not prepared to consider the return of refugees from Egypt, Serbia or any European capitals. He also informed the British that 'aristocratic' classes would not be allowed back because they were still actively hostile. According to him this could be seen through the actions of the White organisations abroad, proclaiming that they were prepared to use the current famine as a political tool against the Soviet government. [216]

The British government, frustrated at the slow progress, decided to adopt more radical measures. The Foreign Office had suggested already in June that Chicherin should be told that unless amnesty was granted to refugees the British would have to transport all refugees that were under their control to Vladivostok. It was further stated that French government should be suggested to follow the British example. It was considered that this would be especially useful as the Bolsheviks were more afraid of the Russians taken care by the French since they consisted mostly of men from Vrangel's army. [217]

The suggestion did not materialise in its 'extreme', but in October 1921 the British in any case repatriated a number of refugees from Mesopotamia (Basra), India and Egypt to Vladivostok. The British government stated that they were remnants of the anti-Bolshevik Caspian Fleet and Russians evacuated from Baku prior to the Bolshevik occupation in April 1920. The group consisted of 881 men, 100 women and 61 children. The government reply to the parliamentary question of Commander Kenworthy whether it had not been possible to arrange an amnesty instead of shipping them to Vladivostok was that the Soviet government had declined to take the necessary measures for repatriation.[218]

Leonid Krasin, the representative of the Soviet Trade Delegation, immediately approached Curzon on the issue, asking reasons for the British government's decision to send these refugees to Vladivostok and whether the British would give assurances that

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216 FO 371/6869, File 38, Paper N 9535. Tel. from Mr. Hodgson, Moscow 18.8.1921. PRO

217 FO 371/6867, File 38, Paper N 7462. FO Minute 24.6.1921. PRO.

218 FO 371/6897, File 1279, Paper N 11991. Parliamentary question by Commander Kenworthy 26.10.1921. PRO.

they were not for purpose of hostile action against Soviet government. He also stated that the official statements in the British press, according to which 'Moscow could not see its way to grant an amnesty' to these refugees, was not accurate. He pointed out that the Soviet government had never refused to grant an amnesty, but had put up a practical scheme of repatriation, to which the British government had, however, never seen fit to reply.[219]

The Foreign Office, in its reply to Krasin, stated that despite what the British government had hoped, the Soviet government had consistently refused to admit even the sympathisers of the Bolsheviks to the Soviet Union. Because of that the British government had been left without any other alternative but to send a certain number of refugees to Vladivostok where a non-Bolshevik government still existed. [220] This 'incident' further blocked the road to an agreement between the British and the Soviet governments on the repatriation issue.

The above arrangement of the British government to ship a single group of refugees to Vladivostok did not, however, remove their responsibility for almost 5,000 refugees still in Egypt, Cyprus and Serbia at the end of 1921. Negotiations with the Yugoslav government on the lump sum of money for the exchange of responsibility for refugees had not progressed. The British government had also approached the British Dominions and colonies asking about the possibility of them receiving some refugees under British control. The replies of these governments had, however, been negative. [221] For example, both the Australian and Canadian governments had firmly stated that Russian refugees that were maintained by the British could not be admitted to their territories. [222] New options were therefore being desperately explored by the British government. One of the main plans was to come to an agreement with the *High Commissioner for Russian Refugees*, a post established under the auspices of the League of Nations in autumn 1921.

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[219] FO 371/6870, File 38, Paper N 11983. M. Krasin to Lord Curzon 26.10.1921. PRO.

[220] FO 371/6870, File 38, Paper N 11980. FO to Mr. Krasin 31.10.1921. PRO.

[221] FO 371/6865, File 38, Paper N 1981. Oswald Amery to FO 11.2.1921 and FO Minutes. PRO.

[222] FO 371/6865, File 38, Paper N 6865. CO to FO 22.2.1921; FO 371/6869, File 38, paper N 9624. FO to CO 31.8.1921. PRO.

4.3. Concluding Remarks

From the beginning of the Russian refugee problem the British government adopted a strict attitude against the entry of Russian refugees to Britain. These policy lines were formulated immediately after the Bolshevik Revolution, when it became evident that large numbers of Russians opposing the Soviet rule wished to take refuge abroad. Consequently, the then Home Secretary, Sir George Cave, instructed the Foreign Office that facilities should not be given, save in exceptional cases, for Russians wishing to leave Russia for Britain. Later the Home Secretary Edward Shortt stated that as a general rule Russian refugees were not admitted to Britain. This was the basic principle governing the admission of Russian refugees, even if certain exceptions to the general rule were made throughout the period of Russian emigration.

The categories for 'favourable treatment' were, for example, prominent businessmen, those with close personal connections in Britain, White soldiers who had fought with the British in Russia, officials of the former Russian government, and young people for educational purposes. Exceptions were also occasionally made for other individual well-to-do upper class Russians, especially if their applications were supported by prominent people. The Home Office policy on deciding whether the person qualified for an 'exception to the general rule' was not, however, always systematic.

In general, however, the Home Office maintained a strict policy of not admitting Russian refugees. All the cases were treated carefully and on an individual basis, and strict provisions were set for the entry of individual refugees. One of the most important- though by no means sufficient in itself- was the necessity to provide evidence of financial support, as the Home Office was particularly reluctant to admit destitute refugees. For employment purposes Russians were also admitted only in exceptional cases. In 1919 the Home Secretary pointed out that 'under existing conditions aliens should not have facilities to come to Britain for the purpose of employment'. [223] The outcome of the policies of the British government can also be

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223 FO 372/1262, File 74855, Paper 81955. HO to FO 29.5.1919. (Statement of Home Secretary Edward Shortt). PRO.

seen in the number of Russian refugees. The number of Russian refugees in Britain was probably less than 10,000 at its highest and this number fell further through the onward emigration. Both France and Germany, on the other hand, hosted between 100,000-200,000 refugees in the 1920s.

Economic considerations clearly played an important role in the decision of the British government not to admit Russian refugees to Britain, as Russian refugees were considered to be very numerous and yet they were unlikely to be of any economic value to Britain. The declining economy and the growth of unemployment made both the government and the public hostile towards the admission of refugees. The government was especially reluctant to maintain any Russian refugees at British expense, as seen for example in the case of those refugees that had to be maintained in camps by the British. However, the Home Office was clearly unwilling to admit even well-to-do refugees with sufficient means for their support, although exceptions were made for individual refugees. In addition to economic considerations, the British policy towards Russian refugees might thus have also been influenced by various political considerations, such as the opposition of the Labour Party to the admission of 'White' Russian refugees, or the changing attitude of the British government towards Soviet Russia, especially in view of the importance of trade.

Moreover, the question of the entry of Russian refugees can also be seen in the light of the development of the British immigration policy in general. As pointed out earlier, the Aliens Restriction Acts of 1914 and 1919 were symptoms of 'declined national confidence' and the economic and political turbulence of the inter-war years, which resulted in the increase of anti-alien feelings in Britain. Consequently, Russian refugees among others got caught up in the strict provisions of the 1919 Act, which endowed the Home Secretary and immigration officers with considerable powers over the entry of aliens. This was facilitated by the fact that unlike the Aliens Act of 1905, none of the subsequent immigration legislation contained a statutory recognition of the right of asylum for political refugees. This meant that the entry of Russian refugees could be regulated by rules governing the entry of 'normal immigration'.

The British government did, however, become responsible for a certain group of refugees after the evacuation of General Denikin's forces, due to 'guarantees' given to Denikin and his officers by the British officials in South Russia without the consent of the Foreign Office. As a result, the government took responsibility for some 10,000 refugees that were placed in various refugee camps, for instance, in Lemnos, Cyprus and Egypt and maintained at British expense. Although the numbers were gradually reduced, in autumn 1921 the government was still maintaining almost 5,000 refugees, despite various efforts to end its responsibility for these refugees. Meanwhile, Russian refugees had become an international concern, and the League of Nations was to take up the role of refugee advocacy. For the British this meant participation in the international efforts for the assistance of Russian refugees, but also a possibility of finding a solution to the problem of those refugees that the government was still maintaining at British expense.

CHAPTER 5: SEARCHING FOR SOLUTIONS: THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL REFUGEE REGIME

5.1. The Origins of the Regime

This chapter will consider the emergence of Russian refugees as an international issue in the early 1920s. As pointed out earlier, the scale of the Russian refugee problem was very wide, and individual European countries, not least Britain, were not enthusiastic or even capable of solving the problem by themselves. The British government, as well as for example the French government, wanted to minimise their individual responsibilities, and more importantly, their expenditure towards refugees. The same was true with other European countries that contributed to the refugee work. The chapter will explore international efforts for the assistance of Russian refugees through the establishment of the international refugee regime.

The emphasis of the chapter will be on the work of the regime especially through the activity of the League of Nations, and particularly the High Commissioner for Russian Refugees, established under the auspices of the League in 1921. At the same time the emphasis is kept on the British government by evaluating its motives, attitude and involvement in the refugee work in the international arena, keeping in view the earlier policies of the government that were considered in detail in the previous chapter.

Claudena Skran, in her book *Refugees in Inter-War Europe* (1995) has considered the emergence of refugees as an international issue with useful concepts. In considering the international responses towards refugees she uses a theoretical concept of an international refugee regime. It refers to the formal and informal arrangements created by states to deal with refugees by using shared principles and norms, as well as having established decision - making procedures. For the purpose of this study the framework is especially useful in

analysing how different governments responded and co-operated internationally in the Russian refugee problem in the aftermath of the Russian Revolution and the Civil War.[1]

Skran points out that the emergence of refugees as an international issue after the First World War can be related to a wider process of the growth of interdependence of nations. As a consequence, individual European countries could not stay isolated to the same extent as earlier. The interdependence also meant that circumstances in one country affected other countries. As with Russian refugees, the huge outflow of refugees from the former Russian Empire into different European countries had a major impact on the economic, cultural and political life of the receiving countries. The immigration restrictions in one country also had influence on other countries. In this situation, even if the increased interdependence on the one hand was undermining the ability of individual states to deal with the problem unilaterally, on the other hand it was serving as a catalyst for the formation of an international regime to manage this interdependence. [2]

Importantly, it was the Russian refugee problem that actually marked the beginning of international and organised co-operation between governments, i.e. the formation of the international refugee regime. This, however, did not happen according to a comprehensive 'grand plan'. Instead, it resulted from *ad hoc* responses of the member states of the League to various refugee crises, beginning with the exodus of Russian refugees from the Bolshevik regime.

The initiative for the League to adopt a leading role in the assistance of Russian refugees actually came from the group of private and voluntary organisations, led by Gustave Ador, the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). [3] The emergency relief for the Russian refugees during the evacuations and afterwards in the camps had been provided to a large extent by voluntary charitable organisations, notably the American Red

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[1] Skran 1995, pp. 7-8, 65.
[2] Skran 1995, p. 65.
[3] Skran 1995, p. 84.

Cross, the American Relief Association, The Russian and the International Red Cross, the Save the Children Fund and others. Their resources were, however, quite inadequate and in addition there was not any central co-ordinating body to organise the relief work.[4]

Therefore the Joint Committee of the League of Red Cross Societies and the ICRC decided to call a conference of the voluntary organisations concerned in Russian refugee work in February 1921. As a result of this meeting, Gustave Ador approached the League of Nations Council meeting in Paris in February 1921. In his letter Ador stated that the problem of 800,000 Russian refugees scattered throughout Europe was beyond the power of humanitarian organisations and called the League as the 'supranational political authority' to appoint a Commissioner for Russian refugees. The tasks of this Commissioner would be co-ordinating the refugee assistance, defining the legal status of refugees and assisting the refugees by organising their employment outside Russia or alternatively securing their repatriation back to Russia. [5]

The League of Nations responded by calling an intergovernmental conference on Russian refugees in August 1921. Before the actual conference the member states were asked for their views on the establishment of the High Commissioner's Office. The governments were also asked to submit information as to the numbers and conditions of Russian refugees in their territories. [6] The countries represented at the conference were Bulgaria, China, Czechoslovakia, Finland, France, Greece, Poland, Romania, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes and Switzerland. Britain was not represented but the government supplied a memorandum to the conference on the situation of Russian refugees under their control in Egypt, Cyprus, Tuzla, Malta and Serbia.[7]

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[4] Innes, Kathleen. The Study of Nansen and the League of Nations, (1931?), pp. 17-18; Simpson 1939, pp. 198-99.

[5] Reynolds, E.E. Nansen. London 1932, p. 214; Skran 1995, pp. 84-85.

[6] League of Nations. Official Journal. November 1921, p. 1006.

[7] League of Nations. Official Journal. November 1921, pp. 1012-1018. Memorandum from the British government.

The conference was also attended by the International Labour Organisation (ILO); the International Committee of the Red Cross; the League of Red Cross Societies and the Save the Children Fund. The conference came to the conclusion that the Russian refugees should not be compelled to return to Russia but that it would be expedient to collect, without delay, particulars of the number of refugees desiring to be repatriated. The conference also considered it especially desirable that the High Commissioner should endeavour to extend special protection and employment for Russian refugees. Governments should also adopt a common practice towards travelling and identity papers for refugees.[8] All these considerations came to play an important role in the future work of the High Commissioner.

After the conference the League Council made an official decision to follow the proposition of ICRC and invited the Norwegian Fridtjof Nansen to become the first High Commissioner for Russian Refugees. Dr. Nansen was considered a suitable candidate for the post because he was already acting as League High Commissioner for the repatriation of the prisoners of war and had been co-operating with the Soviet government in this work as well as being assisted by the national Red Cross Societies. He had also accepted an invitation of governments and private organisations to act as a commissioner for the organisation of famine relief in Russia. All this made him a suitable person for the post of High Commissioner for Russian refugees. Nansen accepted the commission at the beginning of September 1921. [9] From this initial starting-point for the assistance of a specific group of refugees, e.g. Russian refugees, the international refugee regime gradually increased its scope, as other refugee groups were included in the assistance schemes. It was only after the outbreak of fighting in 1939 that the regime ceased to function.[10]

During the 1920s the international efforts in the arena of the Russian refugee crisis were centred round the refugee agencies of the League of Nations, most importantly, the Office

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[8] Philip Noel-Baker papers 4/607. League of Nations Conference on the Russian Refugee Question 24.8.1921. Resolutions. Churchill College Archives Centre, Cambridge.

[9] Simpson 1939, pp. 199-200; Skran 1995, p. 85.

[10] Skran 1995, p. 85.

of the High Commissioner for Russian refugees. Even though the League of Nations as a whole served as a forum, especially for decision-making, particularly in the 1920s the High Commissioner, Fridtjof Nansen, dominated the League's refugee work.

It is important to note that because of the role of the League of Nations as a general decision-making forum, virtually all European states were, or at least could be involved. The international refugee regime, concentrated around the League of Nations and its refugee agencies, was therefore state-centric at least in the sense that states constituted its membership and were the major decision-makers. In addition, various private, voluntary organisations also participated actively in the regime. The refugees themselves were not totally excluded from the process, as they were able to make their voices heard through the several organisations representing their interests. Many private voluntary organisations assisting refugees were to a large extent composed of refugees. Also a number of the delegates of the High Commissioner that were sent to host countries were refugees or naturalised refugees. [11]

The question that has not been yet explained, is *why* the international community made the initial decision to assist Russian refugees. The fact that the League of Nations became so directly concerned with the Russian refugee problem is actually quite surprising. As an association of states aiming at universality, a direct involvement in protection of a certain refugee group, in this case the Russian refugees, was bound to incur a certain amount of hostility from Soviet Russia. The fact that Soviet Russia was not a member state of the League clearly made this decision easier; in fact had this been differently, it could have even been impossible for the League to take this step.[12]

This does not, however, explain the reasons behind the League's decision to assist refugees. As pointed out by Claudena Skran, this was linked to the wider process of the growth of interdependence of nations, especially after the First World War. The League of Nations, on

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[11] Skran 1995, pp. 73-84.

[12] Simpson 1939, p. 191.

its part, had been established in 1919 by forty-two governments 'in order to promote international co-operation and to achieve international peace and security'. [13] The war and its aftermath led to huge refugee movements that clearly created a threat to the international stability and security. Although there had been earlier mass movements of refugees before, it was only after the war and the establishment of the League of Nations that refugees emerged as an international issue, as for the first time individual states recognised the need for international co-operation in order to manage the problem.

In addition to the considerations above, Claudena Skran has considered three alternative explanations for the creation of the international refugee regime. The most obvious explanation, according to Skran, is the principle of humanitarianism. Clearly without any humanitarian motives, the governments would have refused to take responsibility for the refugee problem and would not have agreed on the establishment of the post of High Commissioner for Russian Refugees. Many countries that were not hosting refugees themselves, like Belgium and Spain, supported the refugee assistance for humanitarian reasons.

The humanitarian reasons alone are nevertheless an inadequate explanation. In fact co-operation on humanitarian issues rarely took place. The most striking example is the refusal of the League of Nations to assist the starving people in Russia and Ukraine at the beginning of the 1920s despite the urgent pleas from Dr. Nansen. The main reason for the refusal was the view shared by most of the delegates that by helping starving people the League would in fact be helping the Bolshevik government, something the League wanted to avoid very carefully. [14]

Another theoretical explanation for the creation of the international regime is the theory of the 'hegemonic power'. According to this point of view, the creation of the regime and the setting the rules for the regime were dictated by the most powerful country, the one that had

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[13] Skran 1995, pp. 4-5, 30-31, 65.
[14] Skran 1995, pp. 85-86.

hegemonic power over the others. In inter-war Europe the problem with applying the hegemonic power theory is that it is actually impossible to identify any superior power. The United States, though it was the strongest economic and military power after the war, refused to join the League, which signalled its political isolationism. Both France and Britain attempted to gain a leadership role in world politics after the war but neither of them was so powerful in relation to the other that they could have adopted the absolute leading role.

The fact that might speak for the leading role of France in the creation of the regime is that it announced its support for the establishment of the post of High Commissioner, while the British seem to have maintained more ambivalent attitude towards the proposal. In its letter to the Secretary General of the League, the British government welcomed the proposal that the League should take up the question of refugees. However, they were more of an opinion that a joint organisation should be established by the League of Red Cross Societies and the ICRC, than that the post of High Commissioner should be established under the auspices of the League of Nations. [15] Also, the British delegate did not attend the initial intergovernmental conference on Russian refugees in August 1921. [16]

The French 'willingness' to support the proposal does not, however, equal to the proposition that the French government played the role of 'hegemonic power' in the creation of the regime. It was not that the French government initiated the proposal or pushed other governments to support it. In fact, other governments, such as Belgium, Czechoslovakia and Switzerland also offered initial support to the appointment of the High Commissioner. Finally, in the intergovernmental conference on Russian refugees in August 1921, the governments present gave their unanimous support for the establishment of the post. [17]

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[15] FO 371/6867, File 38, Paper N 5827. The Secretary to the Cabinet to the Secretary-General of the League of Nations, 13.5.1921. PRO.

[16] Skran 1995, pp. 87-88.

[17] Philip Noel-Baker papers 4/615. League of Nations. Summary of the documents received by the Secretariat since the 12th session of the Council, 16.6.1921; Skran 1995, pp. 85, 88.

In addition to two previous explanations, there is another quite evident reason behind the establishment of the international regime, that of the 'pursuit of self-interest'. [18] European governments were eager to diminish their individual responsibilities for the Russian refugees by making them a responsibility of an international organisation. It was especially Britain and France who had special national interests in the issue, since both governments had found themselves both morally and financially responsible for certain groups of refugees in the aftermath of the Russian Civil War.

According to the information provided by the governments, by August 1921 France had spent over 150 million francs (approximately £3,8 million) mostly on the evacuation and maintenance of Vrangel's refugees and in August 1921 was spending about 4 million francs a month on the refugees. Britain on her side had spent a million pounds on Denikin's refugees and was still maintaining almost 5,000 refugees in Egypt, Cyprus and Serbia at a cost of around £20,000 a month. [19] As seen earlier Britain had desperately tried to come to an agreement both with the Serbian government by offering a lump sum for the ending of their responsibilities towards the refugees, as well as with the Soviet government on the repatriation of refugees, but both these plans had failed.

France on her side had also tried to come to an agreement with the Soviet government on the repatriation of the refugees, equally without success [20]. Thus, the failure of national policies to settle the refugee problem led to the conclusion that some international methods were required sooner or later. This view was firmly expressed, for example, by J.S. Gregory from the British Foreign Office in May 1921. Many other European states had also in their interest the internationalisation of the problem, especially those Central European states who themselves hosted a considerable proportion of refugees and were unable to cope with the problem merely with the help of the private relief agencies.[21]

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[18] Skran 1995, pp. 88-89.

[19] League of Nations. Official Journal. November 1921, pp. 1010-18; FO 371/8154, File 43, Paper N 1791. Russian refugees, FO Minutes 24.2.1922.

[20] League of Nations. Official Journal. November 1921, p. 1011.

[21] Skran 1995, pp. 89-90.

The interesting question to consider is why the British government, being very eager to find a solution to the refugee problem and liquidate its responsibilities, remained somewhat ambivalent towards the proposal of the establishment of the post of High Commissioner. They did not, for example, attend the initial intergovernmental conference on Russian refugees in August. There might be truth in the comment of F. P. Walters, writer of the official history of the League of Nations, that the British were unwilling to contribute to the solution of the problem for which they admitted no responsibility [22].

On the other hand the British ambivalence should not be exaggerated. After all the government did announce its support for the proposal that the League of Nations should take up the refugee question, even if it did not specifically advocate the establishment of the post of High Commissioner. However, the government undoubtedly had an interest in 'internationalising' its financial burden on refugees. It was also clear that the British government, as a major political power in Europe and a member of the League, had to participate in the international efforts to assist Russian refugees, even if it wanted to keep a distance. At no time was the government, however, willing to alter its individual policy towards Russian refugees, for example, regarding their admission to Britain.

Nevertheless, some British representatives in the League wholeheartedly supported the proposal of the ICRC for the establishment of High Commissioner's post from the very beginning. Among them was for example Philip Noel- Baker, a member of the Secretariat most directly concerned with the refugee affairs, strongly supported the proposal of the establishment of the post of High Commissioner. He was of an opinion that the Russian refugee problem could not be solved otherwise than by international action and also believed that governments had a common interest in doing so.

It is clear that the role of individuals was very important in the creation and work of the international refugee regime more generally. Personal motivations of certain prominent individuals guaranteed that there was a driving force for the settlement of the refugee

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[22] Walters, F.P. A History of the League of Nations, Vol. I. London 1952, p. 188.

problem. In this the role of Fridtjof Nansen as the High Commissioner was of particular importance. It can be stated that during the whole 1920s his work as High Commissioner dominated the refugee work of the League. Similarly, for example, the role of Philip Noel-Baker as a member of the Secretariat closely involved with the refugee affairs can be considered significant.

Moreover, the whole Secretariat provided an important leadership in the refugee issues, necessary in the absence of the clear hegemonic power among the member states. The work of the Secretariat and the High Commissioner was assisted by several private relief agencies, led by the ICRC. It can actually be stated that it is very unlikely that without the leadership provided by the Secretariat and private associations the governments would have joined together to form an international regime for the assistance of the refugees.[23] Nevertheless, the consent of the international community to assist Russian refugees marked the beginning of international co-operation in the field of refugee assistance.

5.2. The Office of High Commissioner for Russian refugees: the Beginnings

The main principles of the League action for the assistance of Russian refugees were laid down on Dr. Nansen's appointment in September 1921. Firstly, it was pointed out that the League had accepted the responsibility for political and legal protection of certain classes of refugees [24] and no official encouragement was made for the extension of League protection to all classes of refugees. Secondly, the League intervention was considered to be only

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[23] Skran 1995, pp. 74, 97-100, 287-90.

[24] Originally, the aid was to be limited to Russian refugees, as the title 'High Commissioner for Russian refugees' suggests.

temporary [25]. Also Nansen from the beginning regarded his appointment as temporary and hoped that the problem could be solved at an early stage. [26]

The third principle of the League's refugee work was that its funds could be used only for administrative purposes, and not for the relief work itself. The funds for the relief work were expected to be supplied by governments and private organisations.[27] When Dr. Nansen was appointed it was made clear that the High Commissioner should not give direct assistance to refugees, but should limit his work to help the refugees to proceed to countries where they could support themselves. Only very small exceptions were made to this principle, for example, in the height of the refugee crisis in 1921 and 1922, two small grants were made by the League amounting to £5,500. For the administrative expenses the League gave a small grant, £1,500 for the end of year 1921 and £4,000 for the succeeding year. Nansen himself did not receive any salary.[28]

The immediate tasks of new High Commissioner were defining the legal status of the refugees, developing plans for repatriation and organising the dispersal of the refugees, particularly from Constantinople. At the time of the appointment of Nansen there were still some twenty five to thirty five thousand refugees whose situation was very serious and needed urgent consideration. The next conference on Russian refugees was held at the Assembly in September 1921. In this conference, in addition to the countries represented in the previous conference, Britain and Germany were also represented [29]. In the resolutions of the conference it was decided that 1) a census of refugees was to be taken according to the occupation and a special delegate was to be appointed in each country to co-ordinate action, 2) the High Commissioner would welcome the collaboration of private relief organisations, 3) the High Commissioner was to get into immediate touch with the governments

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[25] It was assumed that only Russian refugees were being addressed and also that the problem would be solved quickly, in maximum ten years. This is why no one bothered to define 'refugees', either. (Reference: Marrus 1985, p.89.)

[26] Simpson 1939, pp. 192-94.

[27] Simpson, Sir John Hope. Refugees. Preliminary Report of a Survey. The Royal Institute of International Affairs 1938, p. 75.

[28] MacCartney (C.A) R. Refugees: The Work of the League. London 1931, pp. 21-22; Simpson 1939, pp. 195, 200.

[29] Skran 1995, p. 91.

concerned in order to procure the necessary identification papers for Russian refugees, 4) the conference should call on the ILO to communicate with authorities in countries where the unemployment crisis was less acute in order, if possible, to transport refugees to these countries, 5) the aim of the High Commission was the final settlement of the problem and not charitable relief.

The conference also acknowledged the special problem of Constantinople and asked the High Commissioner to get in touch with the French government and the American Red Cross. Nansen was also to get in touch with the largest private, foreign and Russian organisations for aid in the refugee problem. [30] The French government had been responsible for feeding the military refugees from Vrangel's army and the American Red Cross, assisted with other private and Russian organisations, the civilian refugees. [31] The French government had announced in April that it would end all aid to refugees in Constantinople stating that the continued existence of Vrangel's military units on foreign territory 'was inadmissible from an international point of view' and therefore they should be disbanded.[32] Also the American Red Cross had announced that it would end feeding the civilian refugees in Constantinople. [33]

Nansen's first task, therefore, was to persuade the French and the American Red Cross to continue their support for refugees until organised evacuations could be arranged from Constantinople. His appeal was partly successful, so that the French government agreed to continue feeding the remainder of the General Vrangel's army until its members could be evacuated. The American Red Cross, which had been feeding approximately 14,000 civilian refugees, however, indicated that it had no further resources to continue their work. It nevertheless promised to hand over its stores to other assisting agencies before their

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[30] Philip Noel-Baker papers 4/607. Resolutions passed at Conference of delegates on 16-19 September 1921.

[31] Simpson 1939, p. 73; Schaufuss, Tatiana. 'The White Russian Refugees'. The Annals of the American Academy. May 1939, p. 47.

[32] Johnston 1988, p. 194, footnote 11.

[33] Simpson 1938, p. 43.

withdrawal.[34] The High Commissioner appealed to private organisations in order to take over role hitherto carried by the American Red Cross. As a consequence, a number of women's and international associations gathered around £1,000. [35] The American Relief Administration also took over some of their work.[36]

Nansen clearly recognised the extent and value of the work carried out by private voluntary organisations in helping refugees. In order to organise the co-operation of refugee work, he invited the voluntary organisations to form a joint Advisory Committee to assist the work of the High Commission at the very beginning of 1922. By February 1922 the Committee had already held a number of meetings, as well as passed important resolutions and recommendations. Nansen pointed out that the help of the Committee was invaluable to the office of High Commissioner. [37] The Committee was represented by sixteen private organisations, among which were the International Committee of the Red Cross, the League of Red Cross Societies, the Save the Children Fund and the Comité des Zemstvos et villes Russes (Union of Zemstvos and Towns, i.e. Zemgor). During the war, the Zemgor had assisted civilians behind the front lines and assisted in the evacuations from areas of military operations. After 1918 it had constituted itself in Paris, having also executive offices in Prague and other major émigré centres. Its work aimed at helping émigrés in different areas, especially in matters of health and education. The funds for the work came largely from the assets of the Russian embassies abroad that were distributed by the Conference of Russian Ambassadors in Paris under the chairmanship of V.A. Maklakov.[38]

Among other organisations represented in the Advisory Committee were the European Student Relief, The Russian Red Cross (old organisation), the Jewish Colonisation Association, The Armenian Refugees Fund, the Russian Famine Relief Fund, the Imperial

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[34] League of Nations. Official Journal. April 1922, p. 343.

[35] ibid., p. 344.

[36] Simpson 1939, p. 201.

[37] Philip Noel-Baker papers 4/472. Russian refugees. General report up to February 1922 by Fridtjof Nansen; FO 371/8159, File 43, Paper N 8934. Report by Nansen to the Third Assembly 15.9.1922.

[38] Raeff 1990, p. 30.

War Relief Fund, the Y.M.C.A, and the Russian Relief and Reconstruction Fund (RRRF).[39] These organisations were also represented in Britain, and were actively involved in the refugee relief. The RRRF as earlier mentioned, was established in Britain through the activity of some British individuals in the field of Russian affairs. The Headquarters of the Russian Red Cross (old organisation) were in Paris, where in 1921 a General Committee was established to act as the administrative organ of the RRC.[40] In Britain the Red Cross changed its name officially to Russian Benevolent Society in 1920, although it was still continued to be referred as the Russian Red Cross Society (old organisation).

In his general report of the work accomplished up to March 1922, Nansen further explained the problems of the Russian refugees and actions taken for their relief since the establishment of the commission. He pointed out that during 1921 several governments had spent immense sums in maintaining Russian refugees by a system of doles. According to Nansen if only a small part of these sums had been placed at the disposition of the High Commissioner and had he been invited with these sums to secure productive employment for refugees, the whole problem might have been solved very quickly, and for much less expenditure than already had been made by governments.

The problem was that the High Commissioner did not have funds for relief apart from small sums for administrative purposes and what he had secured from the private organisations. Therefore Nansen considered it his most important task to find employment for refugees, so that they could be dispersed from places where they were living destitute to places where they could work. This was also a measure that he could start without undue expenditure. In order to carry out this task he proceeded immediately to carry on the recommendation of the intergovernmental conference of September 1921, by instructing the governments to take a census of Russian refugees in their countries. The purpose of this census was to

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[39] League of Nations. Official Journal. April 1922, p. 343.
[40] Kudriakova 1995, pp. 13-14.

secure reliable data as to the numbers and professions of refugees who were unemployed or without means of subsistence. [41]

The British government was also informed in November 1921 by the League of Nations that a census should be taken of Russian refugees in British possessions as well as in United Kingdom. It was further instructed that the census needed to be taken only of refugees who were maintained at the public expense and who had no reasonable prospect of finding employment. As regards those refugees who were not interned in camps, it was stated to be sufficient to know the total number of men, women and children.[42]

As pointed out in the previous chapter, the British government informed the League of Nations that there was no record of 'Russian refugees' in Britain. According to official statements of the British government no Russian refugees were maintained at the public expense in the United Kingdom, but only refugees that were placed in the camps were maintained from the public funds. Their number and cost of maintenance, on the other hand, could be stated exactly by the government. In fact Britain had forwarded a memorandum to the intergovernmental conference on Russian refugees in August 1921, stating the history, present situation and the total number of refugees maintained by the British [43]. Therefore, as no refugees were maintained by the government in the United Kingdom, there was actually no need to take a census for the information of the High Commissioner. On the other hand, the general census of Russian refugees would have naturally helped to clarify the number of Russian refugees in Britain, and therefore been useful both for the British authorities and the High Commissioner and the League of Nations in general.

At the international level the High Commissioner received invaluable help from the ILO which to a large extent carried out the censuses for the High Commissioner in several

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41 League of Nations. Official Journal. April 1922, p. 342.

42 FO 371/6871, File 38, Paper N 12375. From Mr. E.A. Frick, League of Nations to the FO 3.11.1921. PRO.

43 League of Nations. Official Journal. November 1921, pp. 1012-1018. Memorandum from the British government.

countries where Russian refugees constituted significant numbers. As a next stage Nansen approached all the governments that were likely to be able to help by giving them information on the numbers of refugees and their occupations and asking if the governments could offer any employment for the refugees.[44] The results, however, were disappointing. Many governments failed to reply at all, and majority of those who did reply informed him that they had no openings for refugees. [45] The British government was also approached by Nansen with an enquiry regarding the prospects of its providing employment for refugees. The Foreign Office replied that in view of unemployment in the UK employment could not be found for Russian refugees. The comment of Mr. Evans at the Foreign Office clearly pointed out the negative attitude of the British government to the question by stating: 'We certainly cannot help Dr. Nansen here, I am afraid'. [46] This, of course, is not surprising considering the strict policy of the British government regarding the entry of Russian refugees to Britain, especially so for the purpose of employment.

The responses of other governments were hardly more promising. With the exception of the reply from the Brazilian government, the few replies returned to the enquiry were all negative. The Brazilian government intimated that there might be some work for a certain number of refugees in the coffee plantations. Nansen pointed out that emigration to totally different climate and as far as, for example, Brazil, would cause several problems, and the conditions under which this might go ahead should be studied carefully. He also stated that in all the replies it was pointed out that owing to the economic depression and its effect upon the labour market, it was impossible for governments to find work for the refugees. [47]

As already mentioned, during the 1920s France nevertheless recruited Russian refugees to work in factories and mining concerns, as a consequence of the manpower losses in the First World War. The situation in other major émigré countries, like Germany, was much

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[44] Innes (1931?), p. 20; League of Nations. Official Journal. April 1922, p. 342.
[45] League of Nations. Official Journal. April 1922, p. 342; Reynolds 1932, p. 215.
[46] FO 371/6870, File 38, Paper N 11496. ILO to FO 14.10.1921. PRO.
[47] League of Nations. Official Journal. April 1921, p. 342.

less promising. The German government, among with many other governments, informed the League of Nations that since the government was unable to cope with the unemployment of its own nationals, it could not possibly take any official steps to provide work for Russian refugees.[48] Despite this, until 1923 Germany hosted more Russian refugees than any other country in Europe. Thus, the liberal attitude of the German government in admitting refugees despite the economic situation has to be admired, as well as of course contrasted with the different policy of the British government.

In addition to appealing for employment opportunities for the refugees, Nansen made a similar appeal for Russian refugee students. He pointed out that there was a very close relation between the economic reconstruction of Russia and the training of the future experts in different areas. As a result of the Civil War, the vast majority of different experts had left Russia. Also, under present conditions the Russian universities could not produce the numbers of technical experts who would be required for the reconstruction of Russia. Therefore, he hoped that European governments would be willing to take a share of at least 10,000 Russian students scattered in Europe, following the example of the Czechoslovakian government which was supporting 5,000 Russian students, for example, at the University of Prague. He had also made suggestions to large charitable organisations to give assistance in the education of Russian children. To this end, he had been co-operating with the British Russian Relief and Reconstruction Fund in their effort to raise money for the establishment of the school for refugee children.[49]

In future the RRRF would be responsible for the maintenance of two schools for refugee children in Constantinople, one each for girls and boys, which altogether hosted about a thousand children. The aim of the Fund was to maintain and educate these children until they could become self-supporting.[50] There were, however, constant financial problems and

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[48] Philip Noel-Baker papers 4/615. League of Nations. C.126.M.72.1921.VII. Annex 2. Legal status of refugees in Germany, by Von Haniel 18.4.1921.

[49] League of Nations. Official Journal. April 1922, p 349.

[50] FO 371/8159, File 43, Paper N 8934. Report by Nansen to the Third Assembly 15.9.1922; FO 371/11019, File 340, Paper N 1734. RRRF to FO 20.3.1925. PRO.

the RRRF asked for help for its work by appealing to the British public. [51] The British government was also asked to support the work of the Fund, for example in March 1925, when 'owing to the acute difficulties there was an imminent danger of the schools being suddenly closed'. It was stated that the Fund was the only British organisation working for Russian refugee children, and through its work a certain number of children had already become self-supporting. The chairman of the Fund, Mr. Locker-Lampson asked for a grant from the British government in order to be able to continue its work for the next four years, after which it would be able to close the schools. [52] Not very surprisingly, the Foreign Office turned down the appeal by stating that 'in view of very large sums already expended by HMG on behalf of Russian refugees, no favourable answer to the grant could be given'.[53]

As with employment, Nansen approached the British government personally, requesting it to assist refugee children by offering them free study places at educational establishments in Britain.[54] The document itself does not, however, exist among the Foreign Office documents, and therefore there is no recorded reply from the British government. As it was pointed out in the previous chapter, the British authorities were willing to make some exceptions to non-admission of refugees for educational purposes. Some British universities had also expressed their willingness to offer free places for the children of Russian émigrés. There were also both English and Russian organisations working in the field of education for Russian children. However, the British government was not prepared to make any concessions to its admission policies or agree to admit Russian refugees in general. The decisions of the government to admit certain Russians for educational purposes were always carried out on an individual basis. Generally speaking, the results of Nansen's appeals to governments were clearly disappointing as the governments made clear that the majority of them were not in a position to render support to refugee students. Because of

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[51] FO 371/8154, File 43, Paper N 2177. Letter from the RRRF in the Times, 7 March 1922. PRO.
[52] FO 371/11019, File 340, Paper N 1734. RRRF to FO 20.3.1925. PRO.
[53] FO 371/11019, File 340, Paper N 1734. FO to RRRF 13.6.1925. PRO.
[54] FO 371/8212, File 3024, Paper N 3024. PRO.

this, Nansen pointed out, the High Commissioner decided to 'change the direction' and to support various charitable organisations working in the field. [55]

In order to secure the co-operation of the government and other authorities Nansen invited all the interested governments to appoint official representatives to the High Commissioner. After some delays and reminders from Nansen several governments appointed their representatives to deal with the Russian refugee question. The special officials were appointed in sixteen countries; Britain, France, Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Romania, all the Baltic states, Finland, Italy, Switzerland and Greece. In Britain the special representative of the High Commissioner was the Foreign Office, as well as in Czechoslovakia. In France it was the Russian department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs; in Germany the Ministry of Interior.

In addition to this, the Commissioner also appointed his own representatives. These representatives were to keep in close touch with the government representatives, as well as the Russian refugee organisations, to assist them carrying out the census and to execute the instructions of the High Commissioner. Nansen also instructed these representatives to carry out a special census of Russian refugee children, including an enquiry into the schools in which they were being educated[56]. Altogether fourteen countries appointed representatives to deal with the refugee question in co-operation with the High Commissioner. The governments who agreed to appoint the delegate for Nansen were Britain, France, Germany, Poland, Bulgaria, Romania, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Estonia, Latvia, Finland, Austria, Turkey and Hungary. In Britain Mr. L.B Golden from Save the Children Fund was appointed a representative of the High Commissioner.[57]

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[55] League of Nations. Official Journal. November 1922, pp. 1137.

[56] League of Nations. Official Journal. April 1922, p. 349.

[57] League of Nations. Official Journal. April 1922, pp. 342-43, 350-351.

5.3. The Constantinople Problem

After the preliminary tasks of establishing the organisational framework, appointing representatives and securing the co-operation of the different voluntary organisations, the High Commissioner had to turn his attention to the urgent refugee problem in Constantinople. After the evacuation of General Vrangel's armies in South Russia in November 1920, large number of refugees were congested in Constantinople. At the time of the appointment of Nansen, there were still some 35,000 refugees left in and around the city without means of support. [58] Strictly speaking the Constantinople problem did not properly fall within the functions of the High Commissioner, as he was supposed to concentrate on the legal status of refugees, as well as on repatriation and employment prospects. However, Nansen pointed out that the distress among the refugees was so wide and acute that he did not consider it useful to try to find employment for people who were actually starving.

The main problem was that the High Commissioner did not have any funds at his disposal to tackle the problem. In the critical situation Nansen made an appeal to the High Commissioners in Constantinople of Great Britain, France and Italy asking them to give all the possible assistance they could in the serious situation and to draw the attention of their governments to the matter. He also appealed personally to the heads of three principal Allied governments, suggesting that they would make a special grant of funds. [59] The British government, however, was careful to point out to the League of Nations that it did not consider itself responsible for refugees at Constantinople, but was of an opinion that Italian and French governments should relieve distress among refugees there.[60]

The replies of the British government to the appeals of the private organisations were as negative. Mr. L.B Golden from the Save the Children Fund approached the Foreign Office in November 1920 and asked for a grant to the relief of Russian refugee children in

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[58] Simpson 1939, pp. 69-73.

[59] League of Nations. Official Journal. April 1922, pp. 343-44.

[60] FO 371/6871, File 38, Paper N 12808. The Secretary to the Cabinet to FO 18.11.1921. PRO.

Constantinople, as money at the disposal of the Fund was inadequate in itself to give any substantial aid to the children. He also pointed out that the whole refugee problem had reached dimensions that were beyond the resources of a charity, and that the governments of Europe should make further efforts to control and alleviate it. Therefore, the Committee of the Fund trusted that the British government 'which had generously supported the Russian refugees who had been given an asylum in British territory', would be prepared to extend that support to those refugees congested in Constantinople.

Mr. Golden pointed out that if the British government were prepared to give a substantial grant, for example, the sum of £50,000, the Fund could subscribe the further £10,000, which together would constitute a sufficient sum for the help of these children. Lord Curzon, the Foreign Secretary, however, replied that because the British government had already undertaken large liabilities in connection with Russian refugees, it was not possible for it to supply any further money to the Fund.[61] The Russian Relief and Reconstruction Fund also asked for funds from the British government for its work for the relief of refugees in Constantinople and surrounding areas. In November 1920, after the collapse of General Vrangel's troops it took care of Russian children that had been evacuated from the British hospital. [62] As mentioned the Fund had also established two schools for refugee children in Constantinople. In summer 1921 the RRRF approached the Foreign Office with a suggestion that the British government would support agricultural colonies for refugees in the vicinity of Constantinople. Consistent with the earlier replies, the Foreign Office stated that 'they regretted that HMG was unable to offer any assistance because they had already spent large sums on refugees'. [63]

Pressure on the part of prominent British individuals working actively in the refugee field, however, proved more successful. The British High Commissioner in Constantinople, Sir

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[61] FO 371/5419, File 29, Paper N 3529. L.B. Golden to Earl Curzon 29.11.1920 and FO to the Secretary of the Treasury 11.12.1920. PRO.

[62] FO 371/5424, File 46, Paper 2312. Admiral de Robeck to FO 11.11.1920. PRO.

[63] FO 371/6867, File 38, Paper N 7321. RRRF to FO 23.6.1921 and FO to Colonel Ward, RRRF, 15.6.1921. PRO.

Horace Rumbold appealed to the Foreign Office at the end of 1921 by stressing the urgent situation in Constantinople. Also the Allied Commander-in-Chief in Constantinople, General Harington had made urgent appeals to the British government and public during the autumn of 1921. In his letter to the editor of *The Times* on 4 November 1921 he stated: 'we are faced with 28,000 starving Russians on the streets, mostly invalids, women and children, faced with winter, starvation and death ' [64]. Sir Samuel Hoare, the new head of the Constantinople Office, established to co-ordinate the refugee work in Constantinople, also used all his efforts to persuade the British government to agree to make a special grant for the relief of refugees in Constantinople. [65]

The issue was considered by the Foreign Office in December 1921. The report on Russian refugees at Constantinople stated that many had already died of starvation and further deaths should be expected. It was also pointed out that the private relief organisations did not have nearly sufficient capacities for solving the problem. [66] Among the private organisations working in Constantinople were for example a Relief Committee led by Lady Rumbold, Sir Horace Rumbold's wife, Colonel Procter's International Relief Committee, various Red Cross organisations, the Save the Children Fund and the Russian Relief and Reconstruction Fund [67]. The British Committee of the Russian Red Cross also assisted in the refugee work by for example by handing over some stores to Colonel Procter and sending other grants for his committee.[68]

Russian organisations in Britain, primarily the Russian Red Cross Society and the Russian Refugees Relief Association also carried out important work for Russian refugees in Constantinople. The Russian Refugees Relief Association (RRRA) was established in London after the collapse of General Vrangel's army for the relief of refugees evacuated

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64 The Times 4.11.1921.

65 Philip Noel-Baker papers 4/472. Report by Samuel Hoare; Stoessinger, John. The Refugee and the International World Community. Minneapolis 1956, p. 17.

66 FO 371/6872, File 38, Paper N 13517. Report on the Russian refugees at Constantinople, December 1921. PRO.

67 Philip Noel-Baker papers 4/472. Report by Samuel Hoare; FO 371/5419, File 29, Paper N 3529. L.B. Golden, Save the Children Fund to Earl Curzon 29.11.1920. PRO.

68 FO 371/8217, File 6462, Paper N 6462. Capt. Kennedy to Mr. Leeper 4.7.1922. PRO.

from the Crimea. Because of the seriousness of the situation in Constantinople, the RRRA concentrated primarily on assisting refugees in Constantinople by sending money and clothing. Many well-known members of the Russian colony, as well as some prominent British participated in the work of RRRA, such as Konstantin Nabokov, E.V. Sablin, A.M. Onu, Adriana Tyrkova-Williams, who was the Chairman of the Committee, her husband Dr. Harold Williams, Princess E.G Golitsyn and Prince V. Golitsyn, Baron Alexander Meyendorff, S.V. Shklovskii, Count G.P Beningsen, Professors D.D. Gardner and V.I. Isaev, Sir Alfred Knox and Rev. H.J. Fynes-Clinton. [69]

The fact that the RRRA united so many prominent members of the Russian colony meant that they managed to arrange the work of the association very effectively. Appeals were published in the British and émigré press, and members also distributed appeals in churches. It was stated by the Association that the British press had granted them great help by letting them publish their appeals in the papers free of charge.[70]

The report considered at the Foreign Office in December 1921 further emphasised the British role in the relief work. It was pointed out that the voluntary relief had been carried out to a large extent by British community and that Lady Rumbold's Committee was carrying an important part of this work. The British troops were also giving up part of their rations to provide food for the refugees. The Foreign Office pointed out that the policy of the British government not to give any help or relief to refugees in Constantinople, apart from a grant of £20,000 to General Harington after the collapse of General Vrangel's army, had been successful until now. The French had promised to continue to feed refugees until recently, but they had now refused to give any further help. As a consequence of this, the situation of the refugees in Constantinople had become much worse.

The report also pointed out that Sir Samuel Hoare was going to leave for Geneva to meet the League of Nations and that it was hoped it was possible to produce the scheme for the

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[69] H.W. Williams papers, Add. 54466, Vol. XXX1, ff. 71-72, 74-78. British library, department of manuscripts.
[70] Ibid., ff. 72, 74-78.

disposal of refugees before spring. Therefore it was urgent to produce relief for the next two or three months. According to a report there was £7,000 worth of food at Constantinople and if this would be placed immediately at the disposal of Lady Rumbold's Committee, the situation would be considerably relieved. The Foreign Office considered that besides humanitarian there were also political reasons. Starvation meant that refugees were more desperate and therefore more responsive to Bolshevik propaganda. The British were also responsible for the maintenance of order, as the Allied Commander-in-Chief, General Harington, was British. In addition to these reasons, epidemic diseases such as typhus, cholera and smallpox were spreading among the refugees who were facing starvation, and constituted therefore a threat to British troops. [71]

After a careful consideration the British government agreed in late December 1921 to allocate a grant of £20,000 worth of military stores, foodstuff and other supplies for the relief of the refugees. The Foreign Office also was of the opinion that the British representatives in Paris and Rome should be instructed to urge the French and Italian governments to follow the example of the British, and make special grants for the relief work in Constantinople. [72]

This plea was not, however, answered by the French and Italian governments. Thus, Britain was actually the only foreign government that responded to the appeal of the High Commissioner. This decision was to a large extent due to the hard work and constant appeals of Sir Samuel Hoare, General Harington and Sir Horace Rumbold. Without their strong commitment to the problem, the appeal of the High Commissioner might have been left unanswered. In any case, the British could use this issue to highlight their efforts in the refugee work. Moreover, they could then argue that they had provided more assistance to the settlement of the refugee problem than other Allied governments, despite the fact that the British government had always considered that the French should deal with Vrangel's

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[71] FO 371/6872, File 38, Paper N 13517. Report on the Russian refugees at Constantinople, December 1921. PRO.
[72] FO 371/6872, File 38, Paper N 13517. FO Minutes 7.12.1921. PRO.

refugees. In all the subsequent documents this grant was carefully pointed out, as was other British expenditure on Russian refugees.[73]

In his report in April 1922 Nansen also pointed out that the grant given by the British government had been of a great importance for the relief work in Constantinople, and thanked Sir Samuel Hoare for his work in securing the grant. In addition the private organisations, for example a coalition of women's groups, the Jewish Colonisation Association and the International Committee of the Red Cross contributed altogether £9,000. The Jewish Colonisation Association alone made a gift of £1,000 and a loan of £3,000 for the High Commissioner. This money allowed Nansen to buy flour for ten thousand people for two months, during which time a large number of further evacuations took place. [74]

Another important action for the assistance of Russian refugees in Constantinople was the establishment of a special office of the High Commissioner in the city. Sir Samuel Hoare, who had been working as Deputy High Commissioner of the League of Nations since November 1921 [75] was chosen as the head of the new office. He left for Constantinople already at the end of 1921 to examine possible solutions to the refugee problem. In early 1922 the office was officially opened to assist in the evacuation of refugees and to co-ordinate the work of existing committees and organisations that were working for refugees in Constantinople. This was secured by establishing a joint committee of private organisations, presided over by Colonel Procter, the British chairman of the International Relief Committee in Constantinople [76].

The first positive step in the evacuation of refugees was the agreement of the Czechoslovak government to accept 5,000 agricultural workers, 1,000 students and also a certain number

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[73] See for example FO 371/8154, File 43, Paper N 1773 and File 43, Paper N2120. PRO.

[74] League of Nations. Official Journal. April 1922, p. 344; Skran 1995, p. 187.

[75] FO 371/8154, File 43, Paper N 2120. Cecil Harmsworth to Lord Curzon 8.3.1922. PRO.

[76] FO 371/8159, File 43, Paper N 8934. Report by Nansen to the third Assembly 15.9.1922. PRO.

of children and their teachers to Czechoslovakia. This was something that had been agreed by the Czechoslovak government already in August 1921. Difficulties, however, arose with securing the transfer in practice, and by Christmas 1921, only 1,000 students and 2,000 agricultural workers and a small proportion of children had been transferred to Czechoslovakia [77]. The problems with the realisation of the transfer were related to difficulties in connection with visas, transport, and feeding of the refugees while they were travelling.

Additionally, the transport difficulties through the Balkan countries were causing serious problems. Therefore, Samuel Hoare undertook a mission to the Balkan countries to negotiate on the admission of Russian refugees. Meanwhile, the Czechoslovak government, however, informed the High Commissioner that it was not possible for it to receive the remainder of the 6,000 refugees. Samuel Hoare, in the course of his mission to the Balkans, renewed the discussions of this matter with the Czechoslovak authorities. As a consequence of these negotiations, Nansen stated that there were hopes that it would be possible to complete the programme in the near future.

In the intergovernmental conference on Russian refugees in August 1921, also the Bulgarian government had agreed to accept 2,000 Russian children from the famine area of Volga to Bulgaria. The practical carrying out of this plan, however, produced severe problems, and Nansen suggested that they would instead receive 5,000 refugee children from Constantinople. After negotiations the Bulgarian government accepted this proposal and the first transport of children from Constantinople occurred in December 1921. [78]

Sir Samuel Hoare also secured further transportations through negotiations with the Bulgarian government. Bulgaria also demonstrated its sympathy for Russian refugees by intimating its willingness to accept military refugees from the Gallipoli camp. For some

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[77] MacCartney 1931, p. 23.

[78] League of Nations. Official Journal. April 1922, pp. 344-45; Johnson, T.F. International Tramps: From Chaos to Permanent World Peace. London 1938, p. 241; Innes (1931?), p. 21.

reason the British at first opposed the reception of military refugees in Bulgaria. Whether this was because they opposed the idea of keeping the military formations together by transferring them as a group to one country, or other objections is not clear. The British had been very actively trying to end their own responsibilities towards the remaining refugees in the camps, and would have willingly seen the transfer of their 'own' refugees from Egypt and Cyprus. However, after discussions between Nansen and the British government, the objections were waived. As a result about 9,000 military refugees from the Gallipoli camp were received in Bulgaria. It also promised to take further 1,000 agricultural labourers and their families, as well as an additional few hundred children and adults to Bulgaria.[79]

The Constantionople office also acted as a kind of labour exchange for Russian refugees registering them by occupation and trying to find them employment in various countries. Nansen constantly pointed out that they could evacuate large numbers of refugees in special categories to the countries where they would find employment, if they just had the necessary material means for that. In the spring of 1922 it was also decided to establish League of Nations offices, similar to that in Constantinople, Sofia and Belgrade, as well as to include labour exchanges in these offices. [80]

In his report Nansen pointed out that establishing these exchanges would be advantageous both to the refugees themselves and to the governments that had granted them hospitality. According to him the labour exchange in Yugoslavia, under the authority of the State Commission that was responsible for refugee questions, had worked admirably. By April 1922 10,000 out of the 23,000 able-bodied refugees had secured employment through the services of the labour exchange, and were therefore no more a burden upon public funds. Nansen pointed out that success of the labour exchange in Yugoslavia could be of great advantage in dealing with refugee problems in other countries.[81]

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[79] League of Nations. Official Journal. April 1922, p. 345; MacCartney 1931, p. 23.

[80] Philip Noel-Baker papers 4/472. Draft report of Nansen to the Council in May 1922.

[81] League of Nations. Offical Journal. April 1922, p. 348.

During the first months of its existence the Constantinople Office and Samuel Hoare worked actively towards securing the transfer of refugees from Constantinople to other countries. Important work was done by Hoare in securing visas for refugees who had friends in other countries to whom they could go, or who had enough money upon which they could support themselves elsewhere.

Despite the progress in the dispersal of the refugees it was, however, firmly acknowledged both by Nansen and Hoare that the question of finance had to be solved in order to continue the work in Constantinople. [82] Samuel Hoare stated in his letter to Nansen on 8 March 1922 that he felt that solution could be found only by bringing together the representatives of the various governments concerned. Nansen agreed to Hoare's view that an immediate meeting of the Council was needed because of the acuteness of the situation. An alternative method was proposed by Sir Eric Drummond, the Secretary-General of the League, of circularising the various governments with the report of Hoare's mission in Constantinople. Both Hoare and Nansen, however, considered that the situation was too acute for this kind of action, being too slow. [83] In order to obtain wider attention to the problem Hoare wrote a letter to *The Times* stating the number of refugees still in Constantinople and suggesting that the League of Nations should undertake responsibility for them and arrange means for further placement of refugees.[84]

At the meeting of the Council on 24 March 1922 Hoare presented a report on the Russian refugees in Constantinople in which he pointed out the invaluable help he had obtained from Colonel Procter, the chairman of the joint committee, and Captain Burnier, the representative of the International Red Cross, as well as from various Russian and Jewish organisations. The assistance of the Allied High Commissioners, the various diplomatic missions and the Commander-in-Chief of the Allied forces, General Harington, had also been of outmost importance to the work of the Constantinople Office.

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[82] League of Nations. Official Journal. April 1922, p. 346.

[83] Philip Noel-Baker papers 4/472. Letter from Samuel Hoare to Nansen 6.3.1921.

[84] FO 371/8154, File 43, Paper N 2120. Letter from Samuel Hoare at the Times 6.3.1921. PRO.

The problem of the Russian refugees, however, still remained very serious. Hoare stated that of 35,000 refugees in and around Constantinople about 24,000 wanted to settle in other countries, and of these 24,000, about 15,000 were either wholly or partially destitute. He pointed out that there had been different proposals for the solution of the problem, for example the repatriation of the refugees to Vladivostok. Hoare, however, considered this highly impractical because of the high cost of the operation as well as for various other (political?) reasons. His opinion was that the only satisfactory solution to the problem was to transfer refugees to countries where they could find employment.

Hoare estimated that in order to carry out the evacuation of at least those 15,000 destitute refugees, a sum of £30,000 was required to cover the expenses of the Constantinople Office and the cost of transport. He pointed out that if this sum could be secured from various governments, the problem could be solved before the end of the summer. This view was shared by Nansen who also firmly insisted on the necessity of securing £30,000 [85]. Hoare was, however, also of the opinion that the simultaneous dispersal of large masses of refugees was not desirable, but that the evacuations should be dealt with in stages and all possibilities for the departure of individuals should be encouraged. He also pointed out that the League should be constantly exploring the possibilities of repatriation, even though no Russian would be compelled to return against his own will. However, he stated that most of them would wish to return at some point to their own country, and the League should therefore send a representative to the Genoa Conference and insist upon proper safeguards being granted by the Bolshevik government. However, the most important question at present was the securing of the £30,000 for further evacuations. [86]

The first reactions of the British and French governments towards Hoare's suggestion were not enthusiastic. In the second meeting of the Council in March 1922 the report of Colonel Procter was presented. Procter pointed out that out of 30,000 refugees the Constantinople Office was in the position to feed only 12,000 until 1 June 1922, and that help was therefore

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[85] League of Nations. Official Journal. June 1922, p. 613.

[86] League of Nations. Official Journal. May 1922, pp. 401-403; Philip Noel-Baker papers 4/472. Report by Hoare.

urgently needed. At the discussion, Mr. Fisher, the British member of the Council, stated that the British government had always considered that France should deal with the Vrangel' emigration while Britain dealt with the Denikin one. However, the British were willing to subscribe £10,000 of the required £30,000, provided that the remainder would be found by other organisations and governments.

In the draft resolution proposed by Fisher, he further pointed out that the British contribution of £10,000 was to be considered as an 'absolute and final maximum'. The other governments would have to find the remaining £20,000 needed and if this succeeded, it should be considered strictly the limit and the League should not engage itself in any expenditure over this amount. Also, as soon as this sum had been expended, the League should withdraw its Deputy High Commissioner from Constantinople and close the office there, unless additional contributions were coming from other sources.[87]

Nansen continued to stress the urgency of the situation and the importance of the grant of £30,000 for the ending of the Constantinople problem but the results in persuading other governments to provide funds for the task were not too promising. At the Council meeting in July 1922 he informed the member states that only £17,000 of the required £30,000 had been promised by different governments. In addition to the British, the governments of Belgium, Brazil, China, Czechoslovakia, Japan and Switzerland had promised to give assistance. The absence from the list of Germany, France and Italy, the major European powers in addition to Britain, clearly tells of the reluctance of these governments to enter into new financial commitments towards the refugees. The good news was that the American Red Cross had offered to guarantee the balance of £30,000. The High Commissioner nevertheless hoped that the members of the League would contribute the whole sum and the £15,000 contribution offered by the American Red Cross could be hold in reserve as a safety margin.

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[87] FO 371/8328, File 3215, Paper W 3216. Second meeting of the 17th Session of the Council 25.3.1922. PRO.

Nansen pointed out that since the establishment of the High Commission 9,000 refugees had been evacuated from Constantinople, and that there were still about 18,000 refugees left in the city. A special committee had been appointed to deal with the administration of the £30,000 fund, consisting of the delegates of the High Commissioner, Coloner Procter and M. Burnier, as well as of Mr. Ringland representing the American Relief Administration and Major Davis from the American Red Cross. [88]

At the same meeting Mr. Fisher, the British member, enquired whether the cost was likely to exceed £30,000, and how soon the work could be completed. Nansen stated that the work in Constantinople was difficult, but that he was confident that satisfactory results would be gained. He also thought that the amount of £30,000 would certainly enable the larger part of the work to be carried out, but further urged that the money from the American Red Cross should be kept as a reserve fund, and the member states should contribute more. He stated that the guarantee could be given that if the Council obtained a favourable answer to his request, it would not be necessary to make any further demand.[89]

In the end the total contribution made by member states of the League was even smaller than was first announced; only £11,700 was secured in this way. [90] There was also some controversy about the £10,000 grant promised by the British government. The British seem to have originally promised the grant because they thought that it would come from a surplus of the money they had paid to the League of Nations in other instances.

All this even led to the suggestion by Emrys Evans from the Foreign Office that Britain should withdraw its offer of the grant of £10,000 to the League. Mr. Childs, who was working with the refugees in Serbia, however, informed Evans that the League had already collected the necessary £20,000 from other sources, and Evans' suggestion, put down in the

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[88] Philip Noel-Baker papers 4/618. Report by Nansen to the League of Nations Council 20.7.1922; FO 371/8159, File 43, Paper N 8934. Report by Nansen to the Third Assembly 15.9.1922. PRO.

[89] League of Nations. Official Journal. August 1922, p. 807.

[90] FO 371/9335, File 46, Paper N 6233. Report by Nansen 14.7.1923. PRO.

Minutes of the Foreign Office, was destroyed.[91] The letter of Emrys Evans to Philip Noel-Baker in September 1922 pointed out that in Evans' opinion the fact that the sum of £10,000 had not been paid yet to the League's account was due to a misunderstanding. [92] It turned out that at that point the money had actually not been paid 'owing to an oversight', but the mistake was corrected and the money was paid to the League already during the same month. [93]

Nevertheless, the British clearly seem to have felt that they should have been given more credit for their actions in the refugee question. This was expressed, for example, by Emrys Evans in his comment to the Report of the Fifth Committee to the League Assembly. His view was that Nansen had not treated Britain fairly in his reports, and no mention had been made of the British subscription of £10,000 towards the evacuation of refugees from Constantinople. [94] This criticism was not quite justified because Nansen had stated on several occasions that the British government had promised £10,000 for the evacuation, although in later reports it was not specifically pointed out that it was in fact Britain that had supplied £10,000 of the £11,700 provided by governments.

Between September 1922 and September 1923, a total of 13,286 refugees from Constantinople were resettled. Of these France took about 1,700 refugees, Yugoslavia about 1,900, the USA over 2,000, Germany few hundred and Britain only 25 refugees. [95] The total number of refugees that were admitted to Britain from Constantinople probably did not exceed one hundred. Considering the British official attitude regarding the admission of Russian refugees this is not very surprising. During the next couple of months in 1923 the evacuations continued, so that for example in December a further 1,450 refugees were sent

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[91] Philip Noel-Baker papers 4/618. Report by Mr. Childs on his visit to London and Paris (n.d).

[92] Philip Noel-Baker papers 4/613. Emrys Evans to Philip Baker 13.9.1922.

[93] Philip Noel-Baker papers 4/613. R.A. Leeper to Hon. C. Tufton 125.9.1922.

[94] FO 371/8159, File 43, Paper N 9082. Report of Fifth Committee, as submitted to Third Assembly, Comment of Emrys Evans in the Minutes of the FO 5.10.1922. PRO.

[95] Philip Noel-Baker papers 4/612. Report on the work of the High Commission for refugees presented by Nansen to the 4th Assembly. A. 30. 1923. XII.

to France, and smaller amounts to other countries. A few hundred refugees were also repatriated to Russia. [96]

By far the biggest number of refugees was, however, taken in by the Bulgarian government. During the few months from the end 1922 to the beginning of 1923, it agreed to receive 1,000 invalids and as many workmen with their families, 600 children and 5,000 refugees from the American Relief Administration's feeding list as well as many individual refugees. In his report to the Council in February 1923 Nansen pointed out that by this policy Bulgaria had offered home to no fewer than 75 per cent of 10,000 refugees that constituted the remaining refugee problem in Constantinople. [97] However, it seems that the Bulgarian government did not take quite as many refugees as stated above, but something like 4,500 refugees between September 1922 and 1923 [98].

Additionally, Jewish associations provided important assistance in the evacuation of Jewish refugees and with their help several hundred Jewish refugees were assisted to travel to Palestine and the USA. [99] The Chairman of the Jewish Colonisation Association, Lucien Wolff, who was actively helping Nansen with the Jewish refugees, estimated that there were about 3,000 Jewish refugees in Constantinople in September 1922. Wolff considered that about half of them would need to be evacuated, and half would be absorbed locally. The Council of the Colonisation Association placed a sum of 250,000 francs at the disposal of the Constantinople Office, which was to be administered in consultation with local Jewish societies and a special commissioner that had been sent to Constantinople by the association.[100]

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[96] Philip Noel-Baker papers 4/612. Extracts from the General Report of the Council to the Fifth Assembly. A. 8. 1924.

[97] League of Nations. Official Journal. March 1923, p. 390.

[98] Simpson 1939, p. 73.

[99] Philip Noel-Baker papers 4/612. Report on the work of the High Commission for refugees presented by Nansen to the 4th Assembly. A. 30. 1923. XII; Simpson 1939, p. 73.

[100] Philip Noel-Baker papers 4/613. Letter from Lucien Wolff to Nansen 13.9.1922.

According to Nansen's report to the Council in July 1923, the High Commissariat had secured the evacuation of over 20,000 refugees to 44 different countries. All this had cost around £50,000; £26,000 of this was provided by governments and the American Red Cross and £23,300 by the High Commissariat from the private funds. [101] In September 1923 Nansen reported that the Constantinople problem had been practically solved [102], even though some small-scale evacuations still continued. At the end of 1923, there were fewer than 7,000 refugees left in the city. [103]

The closing of their frontiers by the Soviets in mid-1923 made the legal emigration of individual refugees or groups practically impossible. [104] The evacuations from the Turkish-ruled Constantinople were, however, made possible by the special agreements between the Turkish government and the High Commissioner. With the intermediate role of Nansen the Turks had introduced a special order in May 1923, under which the Russian refugees leaving Constantinople under the auspices of the League of Nations were exempted from paying all taxes except a small visa fee payment, and even this payment was waived as a result of representations by the High Commissariat. At his request, the Russian refugees were also exempted from having to produce Turkish identity certificates on departure. [105]

The situation of the Russian refugees who had stayed in Constantinople got worse in January 1924 when the Turks handed over the Russian Embassy and the consulates in Constantinople to the Soviets. After this the High Commissioner's Office took the semi-official role of protecting the rights and interests of the few thousand Russian refugees who had stayed in Constantinople. Nansen stated that the situation of the refugees in Constantinople had become increasingly critical and for example the Russian organisations

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101 League of Nations. Official Journal. August 1923, p. 1042.

102 Philip Noel-Baker papers 4/623. Statement by Nansen 15.9.1923. A. V/ 19/ 1923.

103 FO 371/9336, File 46, Paper N 8572. Letter from a delegate of the High Commissioner at Constantinople 22.10.1923. PRO.

104 Dowty 1987, p. 69; Marrus 1985, p. 60.

105 League of Nations. Official Journal. August 1923, p. 1043.

in the town were severely suppressed. Therefore negotiations were started with the French government for further groups to be allowed to emigrate there.

The departure of refugees from Constantinople was, however, made more difficult by the decision of the Turkish government that all Russian refugees intending to leave Constantinople would have to obtain a special Turkish passport marked 'Russian political refugee'. [106] In 1926, under the pressure from the Soviets, the Turkish authorities also issued a decree that before 1 August 1927, all Russian refugees were obliged to either obtain Soviet or Turkish nationality, or leave the country. An appeal was made by the High Commissioner and it was once again answered by the American charitable organisations. With their help about 4,700 Russians were evacuated. About 1,400 remained in Constantinople, the majority of whom would apply for Turkish nationality. [107]

5.4. Agreement Between the British Government and the High Commissioner

While participating in the international efforts for the assistance Russian refugees, the British government remained very occupied with the refugees it still maintained in camps in Egypt and Cyprus, as well as in Serbia. As stated earlier, the government was clearly of the opinion that the British expenditure towards these refugees had already been too high and different ways to end the British responsibility for them were continuously explored. Attempts had been made to come to an agreement with the Serbian government on their acceptance of the refugees in return for a lump sum of money. The Soviet government had also been approached by the British with a request of granting a general amnesty to all Russian refugees, which would enable their repatriation to Russia. At the end of 1921 neither one of these attempts had, however, proved successful.

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[106] Philip Noel-Baker papers 4/623. Report by the High Commissioner on Russian refugees, 6 March 1924. C. 103. 1924.

[107] Johnson 1938, p. 245; MacCartney 1931, p. 24.

At the time Nansen was appointed as High Commissioner, the British were ever more eager to bring the maintenance of Russian refugees from public funds to an end. The British Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Cecil Harmsworth's statement in June 1921 clearly shows that British were getting quite nervous about continuation of British resources being used on the maintenance of Russian refugees. [108] In his comment on the refugees he used quite strong and outspoken language by stating that 'these Cossacks, Kalmuks, priests, generals, judges and ladies constituted nothing but intolerable nuisance'. He continued that if the International Red Cross could not arrange matters the British should seriously consider informing the able bodied refugees that, at least after a certain date in the near future, the British government was going to discontinue their dole.[109] This, however, was an exceptionally forcible comment and the other Foreign Office statements were not quite so outspoken, although there was clearly a consensus at the Foreign Office on the importance of solving the question in the near future.

After the appointment of Nansen as the High Commissioner the British, as well as the other League of Nations members, placed their hope on him being able to solve the refugee problem in a short period. Both Nansen and the two Great Powers, France and Britain, shared the view that the best solution for the problem would be the return of the majority of the refugees to their homeland. Nansen personally started his work as the High Commissioner with the hope that a large part of the refugee problem could be solved by repatriation in a similar way to that which he had organised an earlier exercise for prisoners of war.[110] Because of serious famine in Russia during 1921 the negotiations with the Soviet government on repatriation were not, nevertheless, started until the summer of 1922. Negotiations with Krestinskii, the Soviet representative in Berlin were started in August.

Initial success in the matter was gained through the agreement between Nansen and the Soviet government in the provisions of the repatriation plan in the autumn of 1922.

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[108] Skran 1995, p. 149.

[109] FO 371/6867, File 38, Paper N 6310. Cecil Harmsworth's comment 20.6.1921. PRO.

[110] Simpson 1939, p. 202.

Included in these provisions was the consent of the Soviet government to state explicitly that the provisions of the general amnesty of November 1921 applied to all returnees. Also importantly, Nansen would be allowed to appoint representatives in Russia who could stay in contact with the refugees who had returned to Russia. In addition to these provisions, the Soviet government also agreed that refugees who had returned to Russia could visit foreign countries in small groups and tell their compatriots about life in Soviet Russia.

The repatriation of small groups of refugees started in October 1922 from Bulgaria, which was the only host country that agreed to allow the Soviet Red Cross delegation to supervise the process. In the beginning everything went well and repatriation proceeded according to the agreement. However, after a few months the agreement started to fail. After the initial approval of the Soviet government to allow refugee delegations to Bulgaria, it soon stated that reports from the High Commissioner should be a sufficient way of informing potential returnees. The problems were also intensified by the reports in the Russian émigré press that the Soviets shot many of the refugees that returned to Russia. As a consequence of these claims the High Commissioner's Office investigated the issue but they could not find any evidence of mass killings, although it confirmed that many former officers, for example, had disappeared mysteriously. These events nevertheless further increased the unwillingness of Russian émigrés to return to Russia under Bolshevik rule. [111]

Despite the awkward news, pressures for repatriation increased and other governments, such as Poland, Romania, Albania and France wanted to extend the agreement to the refugees in their countries. Before any plans were carried out, the whole issue took a different turn because of the overthrow and murder of Stamboliiskii in June 1923, the pro-Soviet head of the Bulgarian government with the aid of some White Russians. After the incident both the Soviet and the Bulgarian governments refused to restart repatriation and it also brought to end the repatriation plan in general. Altogether only 3,000 refugees were repatriated from Constantinople, as well as about 6,000 mostly Cossack refugees from

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[111] Skran 1995, pp. 151-53.

Bulgaria and Greece. [112] At a more general level, the repatriation plan was also very vulnerable because it clearly lacked the large-scale support of Russian émigrés, which, as stated by Samuel Hoare 'is essential to the success of any relief or protection schemes'. This was something that Nansen probably should have considered more carefully. [113]

The repatriation issue also culminated in accusations against Nansen by Russian émigrés. Interestingly, these accusations were initiated by the Russian émigré organisations in Britain. A resolution was passed by various émigré organisations in London and published in *The Times* on 27 August 1923, pointing out the undesirability of the fact that the famine relief and refugee work were concentrated in the hands of one person, namely Nansen. Their view was that since his work for Russian famine victims necessitated him having good relations with the Bolshevik leaders, he could not act according to the interests of Russian émigrés as High Commissioner. Thus, because of this 'conflict of interest' the émigrés appealed to the League of Nations to appoint a new High Commissioner for Russian refugees. [114]

The appeal of the émigré organisations was directed to Lord Robert Cecil, British delegate to the Council of the League. The letter was signed by the representatives of eight Russian organisations: the Russian Red Cross (old organisation), Russian Refugees Relief Association, Russian Relief Fund, Russian Academic Group, Russian Self-Help Association, Russian Children's Welfare Association, Russian Army and Navy Ex-Service Men's Association and the Northern Association. The Russian National Committee also individually approached the League of Nations on the question and stated their view that it would be desirable to appoint some other person than Nansen as High Commissioner.[115]

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[112] Philip Noel-Baker papers 4/612. Report of Nansen to the 4th Assembly A.30. 1923. XII; Simpson 1939, p. 528: Skran 1995, pp. 153-54.

[113] Philip Noel-Baker papers 4/625. Samuel Hoare to Robert Cecil 24.8.1923: Skran 1995, pp. 155-56.

[114] The Times 27.8.1923; FO 371/9336, File 46, Paper N 7299. Memorandum from United Russian Refugee Organisations in London 30.8.1923. PRO.

[115] FO 371/9336, File 46, Paper N 7299. Memorandum from United Russian Refugee Organisations in London 30.8.1923; FO 371/9336, File 46, Paper N 7703. Memorandum from Russian National Committee. PRO.

In the letter it was pointed out that the Russian colony in London did not require the immediate assistance of the High Commissioner. It was, however, precisely because they were 'enjoying the peaceable hospitality of Great Britain' and were conscious of their independence, that it was their duty to draw the attention to the situation of less fortunate refugees. According to the opinion of these organisations Nansen had completely failed to understand the psychology of Russian émigrés and had more than once expressed himself in sympathy with the Soviet authorities. An example of this was that he had even been elected an honorary member of the Moscow Soviet. His repatriation policy was similarly an unfortunate idea because, according to émigré opinion, repatriation to Soviet Russia was very different from return to Russia freed from Bolshevism. This was the reason for the fact that only about 6,000 Russians had so far consented to be repatriated. Therefore the émigrés appealed to the League of Nations to appoint a special High Commissioner for Russian refugees in replacement of Nansen. This, according to the undersigned should be a person 'who would not be in any way associated with the Russian government, and could deal with the refugee problem with an open mind'. [116]

Interestingly, the opinions of two important British individuals, who both had important roles in the refugee work, were divided on the issue. The émigrés gained some support from Sir Samuel Hoare, head of the Constantinople Office. In his letter to Robert Cecil he pointed out that the signatories of the appeal represented the most reasonable and representative Russian emigrants in London. Hoare also stated that even though he had never been prejudiced against Nansen, he had always considered it a mistake to combine the roles of famine relief and refugee work together. In his opinion the active co-operation of the Russian émigrés was essential to the success of any relief and protection schemes. This he had seen in his work in Constantinople better than anywhere else. According to him the success of his work for the dispersal of the refugees in Constantinople was based to the fact that he had the unquestioned support of émigrés which guaranteed their co-operation.

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[116] FO 371/9336, File 46, Paper N 7299. Memorandum from United Russian Refugee Organisations in London 30.8.1923; Philip Noel-Baker papers 4/625. Correspondence on Dr. Nansen and the Russian refugee organisations and the appeal by Russian émigrés to Lord Cecil 13.8.1923.

With these facts in mind, Hoare enquired if it would be possible to appoint, for example, 'some liberal minded British conservative, who would enjoy the trust of the émigrés, to supervise Nansen's work'. [117]

Hoare's comments are actually quite surprising, after all, he worked closely with Nansen on the Constantinople refugee problem and their co-operation seemed to work smoothly. He might have, however, felt obliged to defend the émigré opinion, since they had highly appreciated his work in Constantinople. According to Russian émigrés 'the activities of Sir Samuel Hoare was like a ray of sunshine through clouds'. [118] Cecil Harmsworth from the Foreign Office had approached Lord Curzon, the Foreign Secretary, in March 1922 already with a view that the appointment of Nansen had been unfortunate, as at the time of the appointment he had been already fully occupied by his work in connection with famine relief. Harmsworth's view was that Nansen should be induced to hand over his duties as High Commissioner to some other person, preferably Sir Samuel Hoare, if he would be willing to undertake the job. [119]

Robert Cecil, however, held a completely different point of view and he strongly rejected all accusations against Nansen. In his letter to Samuel Hoare he pointed out that Nansen was not dealing with famine relief any more, in other words that particular point did not arise any more. Cecil further stated that he considered Nansen 'a man of the highest possible character and disinterestedness, no matter what Hoare's Russian friends may say of him'. He also believed that the accusations that the repatriated refugees had been killed were utterly untrue. Even more surprising was his last comment, according to which he suspected that the attitude expressed by the émigrés had been encouraged by the French in order to 'spike his guns' at the League. He concluded that even though he was not anti-French, he nevertheless disliked some of their methods of diplomacy. [120] Unfortunately, he

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[117] Philip Noel-Baker papers 4/625. Samuel Hoare to Robert Cecil 24.8.1923.

[118] Philip Noel-Baker papers 4/625. The appeal by Russian émigrés to Lord Cecil 13.8.1923.

[119] FO 371/8154, File 43, Paper N 2120. Cecil Harmsworth to Lord Curzon 8.3.1922. PRO.

[120] Philip Noel-Baker papers 4/625. Robert Cecil to Samuel Hoare 28.8.1923.

did not clarify these 'disliked' methods, and how they possibly differed from the British diplomatic measures.

Cecil's strong support for Nansen undoubtedly helped to save him from further considerations of his suitability for the position. Also importantly, if somewhat surprisingly, the Conference of Russian Ambassadors in Paris unanimously adopted a resolution in September stating the importance of Nansen's work continuing. The resolution was signed by Maklakov, ambassador to France and the former Russian Ambassadors to Rome, Constaninople, Japan and Washington, as well as by E.V. Sablin, the Russian *Chargé d'Affaires* in London. That Sablin was among the signatories is especially surprising, since he was the representative of the Russian émigrés in Britain, and it would have therefore been more likely for him to support the opinion of the London émigré circles. Under the signatories of the resolution were also the representatives of the most respected émigré organisations, like the Union of Zemstvos and Towns, the Save the Children Fund and the ICRC. The Advisory Committee to the High Commissioner, composed of the main Russian and other relief organisations, also strongly backed Nansen and hoped that his work would continue.[121]

Britain, on the other hand, after the frustrating negotiations with the Serbian and Soviet governments, had started negotiations with the High Commissioner at the beginning of 1922 on the acceptance of the remainder of the refugees under British control. The British government offered the High Commissioner £150,000 if he would accept the responsibility for the remaining 4,600 refugees maintained by the British. Most of them were in Egypt, Cyprus and Serbia, in addition to few refugees at Malta and Tuzla.[122]

After a few months' negotiations, an agreement was reached between Nansen and the British government, and on 1 May 1922 Nansen took the responsibility for these refugees in consideration of the payment of £150,000. Colonel Procter, assisted by Mr. Childs, was

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[121] Philip Noel-Baker papers 4/625. Comments to the appeal of Russian émigré by (?).

[122] FO 371/8154, File 43, Paper N 1791. Russian refugees, FO Minutes 24.2.1922. PRO.

given direct responsibility for the administration of these funds.[123] Nansen expressed his satisfaction at the fact that Procter 'had in a very full degree the confidence and support of the government of Great Britain', as well as pointing out that he could not 'express in too warm terms his admiration for and appreciation of the work carried out by Colonel Procter'.[124]

Without doubt the British individuals who worked on the Russian refugee problem in Constantinople and elsewhere, such as Samuel Hoare, Colonel Procter, General Harington and Sir Horace Rumbold took their job very seriously and worked unselfishly for the settlement of the problem. However, at the same time they had to take into consideration the 'national interests' of their own government. Thus, Samuel Hoare, for example, stated that the League should take responsibility for the refugees under British control because it could work more effectively for the ending of the problem. He was also firmly of the opinion, that the sum of money offered by the British was sufficient for the League to take care of the problem. [125] Clearly, even if Hoare was sincere in believing that transferring the refugees to the care of the High Commissioner was the most effective way of dealing with the problem, he also realised the importance of the question for the British government. Because of his position he undoubtedly used his influence in the decision-making process of the League of Nations.

In the end the agreement between Nansen and the British government nevertheless was a practical solution because the High Commissioner, Colonel Procter and Mr. Childs managed to carry out the dispersal of the refugees from the camps, mostly to Bulgaria. Agreement was also reached with the Yugoslavian government on their responsibility for 1,500 refugees in their territory. In March 1923 Nansen stated that the task of liquidating his responsibilities in respect of these refugees had been mostly accomplished, and he was even expecting to be able to show a substantial saving on the whole transaction. According

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[123] FO 371/8155, File 43, Paper N 3192. Cabinet Secretariat to F 31.3.1922. PRO.

[124] League of Nations. Official Journal. March 1923, p. 387.

[125] League of Nations. Official Journal. May 1922, p. 402.

to the agreement between the British government and Nansen, the High Commissioner could keep half of the savings on the £150,000 transaction, to be used as emergency relief for other refugees in Constantinople and elsewhere.[126]

In the end Nansen managed to make a quite substantial saving on the transaction by completing the work at the cost of £110,000. The surplus due to the High Commissioner was included in this sum, which meant that the actual cost of the operation was approximately £70,000. At the beginning of May 1923 the League of Nations informed the Foreign Office that instructions had been given to Hambros Bank to pay £20,000 of the anticipated surplus to the British government [127]. The latter half of the surplus was probably paid later during 1923.

Thus, the British managed to end their responsibilities at a cost of less than a half of one year's maintenance of refugees in Egypt, Cyprus and Serbia during 1921, when the government had spent approximately £20,000 a month towards the upkeep of refugees.[128] The British government naturally appreciated the effective manner in which the High Commissioner managed to settle the 'British' refugees in Bulgaria and elsewhere. In conversations between Sir Frederick Butler and Mr. Robinson from the FO and Mr. Lodge and Johnson as representatives of the League of Nations, the former pointed out that the British government had very little reason to complaint about the manner in which the High Commissioner had settled the questions. At the time of the agreement the British were still spending £145,000 a year on the maintenance of refugees in Egypt and Cyprus alone, so by capitalising their liability at £110,000, the British clearly should not have had too many reasons to be dissatisfied. [129]

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126 League of Nations. Official Journal. March 1923, pp. 392-93.

127 FO 371/9335, File 46, Paper N 3970 and N 4022. League of Nations to FO 2.5.1923 and Hambros Bank to FO 4.5.1922. PRO.

128 Johnson 1938, p. 236.

129 Philip Noel-Baker papers 4/622. Record of the conversations between Sir Frederic Butler and Mr. Robinson of the FO and Messrs. Lodge and Johnson, 19-20.2.1924.

Despite this there were, however, some disagreements on the terms of the agreement, due to the War Office argument that it had spent money on refugees after they ceased to be a British responsibility. According to Philip Noel-Baker, the War Office did not, however, have any valid claim for the £14,500.[130]

Consequently, conversations were held in the British Foreign Office between the Foreign Office and League of Nations representatives. The League of Nations representatives pointed out that the Foreign Office appeared to assume it had some say in the expenditure of Dr. Nansen's share, which, according to their opinion, was not the case. They also stated that the League took no liability for the expenditure that had incurred to the British without the High Commissioner's consent, nor did the League have any liability before 9 June, when the payment was completed by the British, opposed to 1 May, when it was supposed to have been paid. Moreover, the League had no liability for maintenance of refugees at all, as delays in effecting departure before the agreed date were due to the British government. The League also refused to take responsibility for expenditure after the departure of refugees, since that was 'camp liquidation', for which the High Commissioner was not responsible.

The League of Nations expressed their strong view that if the British government still maintained all their claims, the High Commissioner had no alternative but to refer the question to arbitration. The Foreign Office, from its side, expressed the hope that everything possible would be done to avoid 'such an unfortunate solution of the difficulty'.[131] In May 1924 Mr. Johnson approached Philip Noel-Baker with a note that the League of Nations was offering £1,380 to be repaid to the British government, a sum based on a general average of the cost of the maintenance of the refugees in Bulgaria, taken over a period of one year.[132] According to Johnson, the League's memorandum in its present form

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[130] Philip Noel-Baker papers 4/622. Philip Baker to T. Lodge, Paris 10.7.1923.

[131] Philip Noel-Baker papers 4/622. Record of conversations between Sir Frederick Butler and Mr. Robinson of the FO and Messrs. Lodge and Johnson at the FO, 19-20.2.1924.

[132] Philip Noel-Baker papers 4/622. T.F Johnson to Philip Baker 14.5.1924.

was 'irresistible', and he was of the opinion that the Foreign Office would certainly accept this offer. [133] Although there is no information about the final result, it seems very probably that the Foreign Office accepted this offer. After all, it was well aware of the fact that without the agreement the British government would still be spending considerable amounts on the maintenance of these refugees.

5.5 Successes and Failures in the Work of the High Commissioner

From the very beginning of the work of the High Commissioner, it became evident that one of the greatest difficulties in dispersing the refugees to countries where they had friends or relatives who could help them financially or where they had possibilities in obtaining employment, was the problem of obtaining the necessary documents for travelling. This problem was especially acute in Constantinople, where the evacuation of refugees was impeded by the lack of necessary identity and travel documents. Most of the refugees had no papers at all, and those who possessed passports of the old regime were faced with the fact that few countries were willing to recognise them. [134]

In addition two Soviet decrees at the end of 1921 deprived of Russian nationality those Russians who had lived abroad for a period of five years and had not obtained a Soviet passport and those who were residing abroad and had failed to register with the Soviet representatives. These degrees had also stripped of citizenship those who had left the country voluntarily after November 1917 without permission of the Russian authorities. [135] Basically all Russian refugees fell under these provisions, as the far majority of them were determined not to obtain Soviet citizenship. Russian refugees had thus become legally stateless.

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[133] Philip Noel-Baker papers 4/622. Philip Baker to T.F. Johnson 19.5.1924.
[134] Johnson 1938, p. 259.
[135] Simpson 1939, p. 233.

Because of this situation, Nansen was determined to find a solution to the problem of the legal status of refugees and provide the refugees with some form of identity papers and visas. The Russian organisations mainly shared the opinion that the diplomatic and consular authorities of the old regime should continue to issue the passports of that regime. This suggestion also gained support from some governments. An alternative proposal was also put forward by the Russian organisations that protective passports should be issued by the Allied powers. None of the Allied governments, however, embraced this idea. [136]

In this situation Nansen initiated the idea of an identity certificate for Russian refugees that would be internationally recognised. The issue of the legal status of refugees had been discussed already in the first Intergovernmental Conferences of August and September 1921. At the first Conference two suggestions were made: the first that the necessary papers should be issued by the states where the refugees had found a temporary refuge; the second that these papers should be issued by the High Commissioner. Nansen discussed these proposals with the ILO, as well as with the Conference of Private Organisations, and in the end decided that the first proposal was preferable. After this he started to prepare concrete proposals concerning the granting of papers of identity, to be circulated to the member states of the League.[137]

In his report of 13 May1922 to the League Council Nansen stated that he had received a number of replies from governments regarding the certificates of identity and visas. With regard to the granting of visas, Nansen had urged that the members of the League should agree to grant them free of charge. In relation to that he had received a reply from British government, according to which it had undertaken to grant all visas for Russian refugees free of charge. Similar replies were received from the Greek and Polish governments. The Spanish, Argentine and Brazilian governments already issued free visas, as did the Serbian government in certain cases. The French and Swiss governments had intimated that visas would be granted free of charge to those who had no means of paying them. Nansen urged

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[136] Johnson 1938, pp. 259-260.

[137] League of Nations. Official Journal. April 1922, p. 348.

other governments to give their reply as soon as possible and pointed out the importance of the provision that the visas should be granted free of charge.

With regards to identity papers, the British government agreed to the proposal of Nansen to grant identity certificates on the model Nansen had circulated, as well as to grant them free of charge. The French government, on the other hand, replied that it was not legally possible for it to do that, but Nansen nevertheless trusted that there might be some way to overcome the difficulty. The French also proposed a Conference of Government representatives for the consideration of the government replies and for the elaboration of a common scheme in the matter. [138] As a consequence of this proposal, Nansen convened an intergovernmental conference on 3-5 July 1922 which was attended by sixteen governments, including amongst others, the British, French, German, Czechoslovak, Polish and Yugoslav governments.

At this conference all the governments that were present agreed to the arrangement which created a special certificate of identity for Russian refugees, the so called 'Nansen passport'.[139] The document, even though it became generally known as Nansen passport, was not identical to a national passport. It was an identity certificate, which, however, could be used as a travel document after a visa was granted by government officials.[140] The governments represented adopted an unanimous resolution under which the member states of the League and the governments of all other countries interested in the Russian refugee problem were recommended to adopt this form of identity certificate for their territory, and to recognise similar documents issued by other governments. [141]

This resolution importantly marked the beginning of international refugee law. Under the terms of the agreement the documents were valid only for one year after which it was

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[138] League of Nations. Official Journal. June 1922, pp. 615-16.

[139] Skran 1995, pp. 91-92, 104.

[140] Holborn, Louise W. 'The League of Nations and the Refugee Problem'. The Annals of the American Academy. May 1939, p. 126.

[141] League of Nations. Official Journal. November 1922, p. 1138.

renewable by the authorities of the state in which the refugee was resident. The documents did not, however, confer the right to return to the country of issue, unless endorsement of that was made on the certificate. Neither did they provide for equal treatment with citizens in regard to labour permits, social security, taxation and many other matters [142]. The documents were originally to be issued only to Russian refugees, but the arrangement did not contain a precise definition of a refugee; it merely stated that they should be granted to refugees of Russian origin who had not acquired another nationality. Later they were extended to Armenian refugees by the Arrangement of 31 May 1924, and to Assyrian, Assyro-Chaldean and Turkish refugees by the Arrangement of 30 June 1928. The documents did not, however, ever become available, for example, to Italian refugees or stateless persons in general. [143]

The member states of the League of Nations adopted the system of Nansen passports in a creditable manner. In March 1923 Nansen reported that twenty governments had agreed to adopt the certificate, and to recognise similar certificates issued by other governments.[144] By September 1923 altogether thirty-one governments had signed the arrangement on identity certificates. By1925 the number had risen into forty and in 1929 over fifty governments had agreed on the arrangement. [145]

As already mentioned the British government was among the governments that agreed to the proposal of identity documents at a very early stage. In his letter to Emrys Evans at the Foreign Office, Philip Noel-Baker recognised that the success of the proceedings was very much promoted by a declaration on the part of the British delegate that they were entirely ready to accept the proposals on identity papers.[146] In the conference the British representative, Mr. Parkin, stated that the British government was prepared to grant the certificates free of charge to all Russian refugees at present residing in the UK. It agreed to

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[142] Holborn. The Annals of the American Academy.. May 1939, p. 126.

[143] Skran 1995, pp. 104-05; Simpson 1939, pp. 239-40.

[144] League of Nations. Official Journal. March 1923, p. 387.

[145] Skran 1995, p. 105.

[146] Philip Noel-Baker papers 4/613. Philip Baker to Emrys Evans 8.9.1922.

grant visas free of charge on all certificates of the same type granted by other governments. However, the British were eager to point out that the acceptance of the proposed certificate did not mean that the British would allow the Russians freely to enter British territory. Moreover, according to British opinion the granting of a certificate of identity would not, in any way, hinder control, but on the contrary the certificates would make possible a more effective control than at present existed. [147]

In practice a charge of five shillings was made for the issue of the Nansen passport in Britain, although it was stated that this fee would be remitted in the case of refugees who were destitute. The certificates were issued by the Chief Inspector of the Aliens Branch of the Home Office. [148] Dr. Golden, the representative of the High Commissioner in Britain, was informed about the British consent to issue certificates of identity to the Russian refugees in the UK, as well as to recognise similar certificates issued by other countries. However, it was also carefully pointed out that these actions did not involve any relaxation of the British policy with regard to the exclusion of refugees from Britain. Furthermore, visas for the UK would not be granted to the holders of Nansen passports unless they were clearly eligible for visas under the existing regulations, or otherwise, unless special authorisation had bee given in any particular case.[149] Thus, it is certain that had the arrangement obliged the signatory countries to accept the unrestricted immigration of the Russian refugees who held Nansen passports between countries, Britain certainly would not have accepted it.

The willingness of the British government to recognise the Nansen passport for Russian refugees was probably also facilitated by fact that the number of Russian refugees in Britain was relatively small. Compared to, for example, France and Germany, the impact of the new arrangement would not be as important as in the countries in which there were a large number of Russian émigrés without valid identity documents. There is, however, no exact

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147 Philip Noel-Baker papers 4/624. Conference on passports for Russian refugees 4.7.1922.

148 HO 45/19995, File 419986/5. HO to the Government Secretary, Government offices 22.9.1922. PRO.

149 Philip Noel-Baker papers 4/619. H. M. Montgomery to Dr. Golden, Save the Children Fund 27.10.1922.

information on the application of the Nansen passport system in Britain, for example how many of them were issued in the 1920s. In the 1926 League of Nations report on the application of the Nansen passport system Britain was not even mentioned among major host countries, i.e. those over 1,000 refugees. [150] Why this was so is unclear, since there clearly must have been more than 1,000 Russian refugees in Britain at that time. The practice of the British government regarding certificates was that the Russian refugees were not required to hold them while in Britain but the passports were nevertheless required if they wanted to travel abroad.[151]

The practices of other governments regarding Nansen passports also varied greatly. Thus, for example the German government, although working actively in the international regime by attending the meetings and conferences as well as by ratifying all the major arrangements for Russian refugees, did not in practice issue many Nansen passports. This practice was linked to the fact that the government preferred to deal with the former Russian authorities, and if possible with the Soviet representatives. [152] Also, for example, the Polish and Finnish governments adopted the passport system in principle but issued them only to a small fraction of refugees in their territory.

On the other hand, some countries used the system very effectively, for instance, Yugoslavia, Latvia and Czechoslovakia. All these countries issued certificates practically to all Russian refugees in their territory. Also in France, the refugees could easily obtain the certificates, although for example in the League's statistics on the application of the Nansen certificates, no data is given for France. Russian émigrés in France could also apply for certificates on various questions of civil status from 'Offices Russes' that were given a definite legal status and worked in co-operation with representatives of the Nansen

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150 Application of the Nansen Passport System for Russian refugees, 1926. A. 44. 1926, pp. 9-10. Reproduced in Skran 1995, p. 121.

151 Simpson 1939, pp. 266-267.

152 Williams 1972, pp. 144-45.

Office.[153] The Central Office under V.A. Maklakov acted on behalf of the regional offices as a link with the Nansen representative and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.[154]

In 1925 the French government nevertheless informed the British that the only form of Russian passport that was properly recognised in France was the Nansen certificate and that no bodies representing the former Russian governments were authorised to issue passports any more. The French Consul General also informed the British Home Office that he was no longer entitled to visa passports delivered by the 'Russian Refugees Relief and Travelling Permit Office', located in the Consulate of the former Russian Provisional government in London, but visas for France could only be issued to holders of the Nansen certificates. [155]

The Relief and Travelling Permit Office in London had been entitled to issue passports of the 'old regime' for Russians in Britain, in addition to Nansen passports, which were issued solely by the Aliens Branch of the Home Office. The British Labour government had considered the future of the Office in the early 1924, after their recognition of the Soviet government.[156] There is no specific information of these considerations, but judged by the statement of the French Consul General, the Office continued to function at least under the Conservative government during 1925. However, it seems to be clear that its status was necessarily soon reduced, especially since in future the Nansen certificate was to become the 'only accepted form of passport' for the Russian émigrés also in many other countries, in addition to France, as opposed to the passports of the 'old regime'.

The issue of the identity documents, however, also raises the more general question of the definition of 'Russian refugee', above all the somewhat ambiguous attitude of the British

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153 Simpson 1939, pp. 299-300; Skran 1995, p. 120; Adams, Walter. 'Refugees in Europe'. Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences. May 1939, p. 42.

154 Schaufuss, Tatiana.'The White Russian Refugees'. The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences. May 1939, p. 49.

155 HO 45/19995, File 419986/50. British Passport Control Office, Paris to Major E.H. Spencer, Passport Control Department, FO 16.7.1925 and French Consul-General to Mr. Porter, HO 27.7.1925. PRO.

156 FO 372/2093, File 1816, Paper T 1816. FO Minute by Major Spencer 18.2.1924. PRO.

government to the question. The British government clearly seems to have had a kind of 'twin-track policy' towards Russian refugees. In relation to the entry to Britain it was strictly pointed out that as a general rule no Russian refugees were admitted and in any case people were not admitted because they were 'refugees' but for various business or personal reasons. This again was facilitated by the fact that the British immigration legislation did not contain a statutory recognition of the right of asylum for refugees. At the same time the government participated in the Russian refugee question in the international arena for example by accepting the arrangement on identity certificates for Russian refugees and was therefore also implying its willingness to recognise them as a special group, as well as to agree to a common practice towards them. It is, however, clear that at no point was the government willing to make concessions on its individual policies, for example, regarding the admission of Russian refugees to Britain.

By 1924 it had, nevertheless, also become clear that the administration of the refugee question through the office of High Commissioner was inadequate. The administrative funds for the High Commissioner's office were further reduced in 1923 and 1924, which made the work of the office even more difficult than earlier [157]. In June Nansen reminded the League Council that his appointment was supposed to be only temporary. He also pointed out that the process of repatriation of refugees had been disappointing and that a large problem of settlement and employment of the refugees still existed, France being the only European country, which was able to absorb labour on a large scale. Nansen's opinion was that the problems of employment, settlement and migration should be placed in the hands of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) which could deal with them more effectively. His proposal also had the support of the Director of the ILO, Albert Thomas.[158]

The proposal was approved by the Fifth Assembly of the League of Nations in September 1924 and in January 1925 the refugee work was transferred to the ILO. The opinions of the

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[157] Philip Noel-Baker papers 4/619. Philip Baker to Major Johnson 5.2.1923 and 4/623. Report by Nansen, 6 March 1924.

[158] League of Nations. Official Journal. July 1924, pp. 5, 962-63; Simpson 1939, p. 203.

delegates were not, however, unanimous. The most enthusiastic supporter for the transfer was the French delegate, Mr. Sarraut. The British representative, Mrs. Swanwick, also strongly objected to the opinion of the South African delegate that finding jobs for refugees did not fall within the scope of the League of Nations. She pointed out that refugee assistance fell within the broad mandate of the League of Nations to promote international co-operation. In the Governing body of the ILO, Nansen's proposal was not met eagerly. A reluctant acceptance was, nevertheless, made shortly after the resolution of the Fifth Assembly.

The change that occurred in the refugee work was more than a formal one, but it did not mean an absolute rejection of the old system. Nansen, for example remained as High Commissioner, although he turned his attention more to Armenian refugees and to their resettlement schemes, as well as to the creation of a Revolving Fund for refugee settlement.[159] He, nevertheless, suggested at the Council meeting in December 1924 that questions of political character might arise, which might not fall within the normal competence of the ILO, and suggested that he would continue co-operating in this connection with the ILO. His proposal was approved by the Council. [160]

The staff of the High Commissioner's Office were transferred from the League's Secretariat to the ILO, and Major T.F. Johnson, Nansen's former assistant, became the head of the Refugee Section at the ILO. Between 1925 and 1929 it provided a unique service in the area of finding employment for refugees by making enquiries on conditions, occupations and employment possibilities in different European countries, as well as by arranging transportation and emigration of refugees to countries that offered work. In order to overcome immigration restrictions, prevailing in most European countries, the Refugee Service started a mission to South American countries to investigate possibilities for refugee settlement there. [161]

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[159] Simpson 1939, pp. 203-04; Skran 1995, pp. 189-190.

[160] Philip Noel-Baker papers 4/612. League of Nations. Report of the work for the refugees by the ILO.

[161] Skran 1995, p. 190; Simpson p. 204.

This mission was headed by Colonel Procter, who had already done remarkable work for refugees in Constantinople. It spent five months in Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay searching out possibilities for employment for Russian refugees. The report stated that there was great demand for agricultural and industrial labourers for example in Argentina and Brazil.[162] Despite promising circumstances, the problems in finding financing for the plan, especially because of the reluctance of European countries to contribute to the scheme, however, meant that in the end only 450 refugees managed to be placed, primarily to Argentina.[163] Despite the failure of the 'colonisation' project, the Refugee Service of the ILO made important progress in finding employment for refugees more generally. Overall, the Refugee Service claimed to have found work for 60,000 refugees during the years 1925 and 1929. The largest numbers of placing were, as earlier, in France, facilitated by active employment policy of French employers. [164]

Meanwhile, the attention of the League of Nations had turned to the shortcomings of the Nansen certificate system. The system clearly lacked uniformity, for example in regard to fees. [165] The refugees themselves considered the passports unsatisfactory, as they only confirmed the stateless status of their holders. In the words of Vladimir Nabokov, holding a Nansen passport was like 'being a criminal on parole'. [166]

Consequently, some of the defects of the original scheme were corrected in the Arrangement of 12 May 1926. The Conference, which resulted in the signing of the Arrangement, was attended by twenty-five countries, including Britain. An important provision of the arrangement was the definition of Russian and Armenian refugees, provided for the first time. The term 'refugee' was defined in the following way: Russian refugee is 'Any person of Russian origin who does not enjoy or who no longer enjoys the

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162 Philip Noel-Baker papers 4/612. League of nations. Report of the work for the refugees by the ILO.

163 Skran 1995, pp. 191-92.

164 Simpson 1939, pp. 206-07; Skran 1995, pp. 192-93.

165 Skran 1995, p. 108.

166 Chinyaeva, Elena. 'Russian Emigres: Czechoslovak Refugee Policy and the Development of the International Refugee Regime between the Two World Wars'. Journal of Refugee Studies, Vol. 8, No. 2, 1995, p. 150; Nabokov 1969, p. 212.

protection of the Government of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics and who has not acquired another nationality' [167]. The arrangement also included certain additions to the original arrangement, for example, the inclusion of children under 15 years of age on their parents certificates and agreement on transit visas to indigent refugees. Importantly, the arrangement also included agreement that the documents should confer the right to return to the country of issue, which had been considered one of the most serious shortcomings of the original agreement. [168]

At the conference the arrangement was signed by the representatives of 22 states, including the British representative, Haldane Porter. However, for some reason the British government did not ratify the Arrangement, despite its initial willingness to do so in the Conference. According to the information provided by the League of Nations Treaty Series of 1929, the arrangement was in force between twenty countries. Britain was not mentioned among these countries, although Ireland adopted the arrangement in February 1927. [169] One can only speculate that after more careful consideration the British government found some of its provisions 'against its national interests'. Perhaps it was the provision for the right of the refugee to return to the country of issue that was found unsuitable by the British government. In fact, this rule was only adopted by Britain in 1937.[170] On the other hand, it should be noted that the Arrangement in any case could only make recommendations, at no point could it actually impose legal actions upon states.

Under the Arrangement of 12 May 1926, the so called 'Nansen stamp' scheme was also introduced. The basic proposal was that a stamp, costing 5 gold francs, would be affixed to the original document. This was meant to be a kind of duty, collected from the well-to-do for the benefit of the poorer and the price of the stamp was not to be obligatory for those

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[167] League of Nations. Official Journal. July 1926, p. 985. Arrangement relating to the issue of Identity Certificates for Russian and Armenian refugees, supplementing and amending the previous arrangements dated 5 July and 31 May 1924.

[168] League of Nations. Official Journal. July 1926, pp. 983-86; Simpson 1939, p. 240.

[169] League of Nations. Treaty Series 1929, Vol. LXXXIX, pp. 48-52. Document no. 2004. Arrangement relating to the issue of identity certificates to Russian and Armenian Refugees, signed at Geneva May 12, 1926.

[170] Simpson 1939, p. 242.

refugees who could not afford paying it. Although the system was not always received with sympathy it, nevertheless, benefited refugees as a group, because a fund was established through the sale of these stamps. Through the provision of small loans for establishing businesses, for example, many refugees were assisted in their attempts to become self-supporting.[171]

Interestingly, especially since the government did not ratify the 1926 Arrangement, Britain also seemed to have adopted the Nansen stamp scheme at least to some extent. It is, however, difficult to state the number of stamps sold in Britain because of the lack of statistics. In the League's statistics on administration of Nansen stamps in 1927, Britain is not mentioned. France, on the other hand had issued almost 5,000 stamps during 1927, the highest number of the governments mentioned in the statistics.[172] In the 1930s, the surcharge from the Nansen stamp in Britain varied from 2,500 to 7,900 Swiss francs a year. From 1932 to 1936 the total in Britain was 19,615 Swiss francs. At the same period the figure for France, for instance, was 584,651 francs and the total sale of Nansen stamps was 904,364 francs. In most of the countries the stamps were sold by government authorities or other representatives. Regarding British practice it was stated that 'surcharges were fixed by the authorities'.[173]

Another important agreement in relation to the legal status of Russian refugees was signed at the Intergovernmental Conference in June 1928, attended by fifteen governments. The conference resulted in signing of the Arrangement of 28 June 1928 by the representatives of twelve states. The most important provisions of the Arrangement were that the High Commissioner was recommended to appoint representatives in different countries to take care of various functions, for example, certifying the identity and civil status of refugees; testifying to the regularity and legality of documents issued in their country of origin;

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171 League of Nations. Official Journal. July 1926, p. 983-86; Simpson 1939, pp. 205, 240; Skran 1995, pp. 108, 193.

172 League of Nations. Russian, Armenian, Assyro-Chaldean and Turkish refugees. Report to the Ninth Ordinary Session of the Assembly. L.N.VIII.1928.1-6. Appendix III.

173 Simpson, Sir John Hope. Refugees. Preliminary Report of a Survey. Royal Institute of International Affairs 1938, p. 83; Simpson 1939, pp. 205-06.

recommending refugees for visas, residence permits, admission to schools; aiming at employment and taxation equality with nationals and, finally, the relaxation of expulsion measures. [174]

Britain, on the other hand, neither attended the conference, nor ratified the Arrangement. The Arrangement clearly had special importance, since it was the first agreement properly recommending favourable treatment of refugees in the matters of labour permits, social security, and taxation. Whether this was an important factor behind Britain's non-attendance can only be speculated. On the other hand, the legal validity of the document was clearly very weak, similarly to other arrangements, since its only power was to make recommendations to the governments, not to impose any actions upon states. This was also realised by the League of Nations. In early 1933 a Memorandum of the Secretariat noted that with the exception of the Nansen passport, the arrangements were producing no effect upon the position of refugees and thus suggested consideration of an international convention. [175]

Importantly, the Nansen Office also supported the idea of a convention. The Nansen International Office for Refugees had been established after the death of Nansen in May 1930 by a decision of the Eleventh Assembly of the League. According to the decision of the Assembly this office was to take charge of refugee work until it would wound up in the course of ten years time. [176] The work was divided between the Nansen Office and the Secretariat, so that the Secretariat was charged with the legal protection of refugees, and the Nansen Office with matters of relief and settlement. [177]

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[174] League of Nations. A.28.1930. XIII. The Arrangement of 30 June 1928, regarding legal status of refugees, p. 4; League of Nations. Russian, Armenian, Assyro-Chaldean and Turkish refugees. Report to the Ninth Ordinary Session of the Assembly by the High Commissioner of the League. L.N. VIII. 1928. 1-6, pp. 2-3.

[175] Skran 1995, p. 124.

[176] Simpson 1939, pp. 194, 206-09.

[177] Skran 1995, p. 140.

Thus, supported both by the Nansen Office and the Intergovernmental Advisory Commission, a special body created by the Council in December 1928, a draft document was submitted to the Intergovernmental Conference in October 1933. As a result of the decisions of the conference, the first refugee convention was born under the title of the Convention Relating to the International Status of Refugees. It was stated to be applicable to Russian, Armenian and assimilated refugees. Although the Convention was signed on 28 October 1933, it only came in force in 1935 because it was required to be ratified by at least two states. In 1935 the Convention was ratified by Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia and Norway. Later it was also ratified by Belgium, Denmark, France, Great Britain and Italy. [178]

The Convention clearly represented the first attempt to create a proper legal framework for refugees, since those governments who ratified the Convention engaged themselves to carry into effect the provisions of the Convention. This, on the other hand, clearly affected the willingness of governments to ratify the Convention. It contained a number of important provisions, relating to wide range of issues, such as identity certificates, expulsions, welfare, relief, labour conditions and education. Because of this, it is actually somewhat surprising that Britain was among the governments to ratify the Convention, especially as it had neither attended the Conference, nor ratified the two previous Arrangements on Russian refugees. On the other hand, the British government made certain reservations to the Convention in respect of national interests, similarly to other governments. By doing so it could actually look after its national interests and make sure that its interests were not jeopardised by the signing of the Convention.

Still, the government for example agreed that restrictions for the protection of national labour markets should not be applied in all their severity to refugees resident in the country, a provision that had also been present in the 1928 Arrangement. Thus, it is unclear why the government was now prepared to agree to this and many other provisions, especially in a view that it had not ratified either of the 1926 or 1928 Arrangements that had contained

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[178] Skran 1995, pp. 124-25; Simpson 1939, p. 244.

similar provisions. [179] Perhaps this was to some extent to do with the fact that the situation of Russian refugees both in Britain and in Europe more generally had become quite stabilised and that their numbers in Britain had further diminished through emigration to the continent, as well as through the process of assimilation.

5.6. Concluding Remarks

Inter-war Europe witnessed a number of serious refugee problems. Of these the problem of approximately one million Russian refugees as a consequence of the Russian Revolution and the Civil War clearly constituted one of the most dramatic. Importantly, it also marked the beginning of the international refugee regime; organised co-operation between governments in the field of refugee assistance, beginning with the decision of the League of Nations to appoint Fridtjof Nansen as the first High Commissioner for Russian Refugees in September 1921.

As pointed out by Claudena Skran, the emergence of refugees as an international issue was linked to the wider process: the growth of interdependence of nations, particularly after the First World War. The League of Nations had been formed after the war in order to promote international co-operation, peace and security. Mass movements of refugees, such as that of the Russian refugee problem, clearly threatened the international stability. Thus, for the first time, refugees became a concern of the whole international community, as the individual states recognised the need for international co-operation.

When considering the international assistance for Russian refugees the importance of Nansen's personal role cannot be ignored. His death in 1930 was a tremendous loss to the League's refugee work.[180] However, underlying the success of his work was the consent of

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[179] Simpson 1939, pp. 244, 566-594; Skran 1995, pp. 124-130.
[180] Skran 1995, p. 291.

the member states of the League of Nations to assist Russian refugees, as well as the leadership provided by the League of Nations. Clearly, irrespective of League's success in the refugee field, the importance of the mere fact that it was willing to take the issue of refugees under its protection can not be denied. This is all the more important, as the Covenant of the League did not oblige the members to accept any such responsibilities [181]. Therefore, the statement of F.P. Walters that the refugee work of the League of Nations was unpopular with the member states [182] can be considered a somewhat overstated view. Member states continued to co-operate and support the refugee assistance of the League and its agencies throughout the 1920s. [183] In view of this, the international refugee regime can be stated to have originated in inter-war Europe.

However, it is still fair to say that without the active role and work of certain individuals and private organisations, as well as the leadership provided by the League Secretariat, it is unlikely that the governments would have joined together in the refugee problem, despite the fact that there were shared interests in uniting the actions of the governments. The decision of the governments to assist Russian refugees was also clearly facilitated by the fact that it was, after all, a quite limited action of 'generosity', directed originally towards a single group of refugees from Bolshevik Russia. Had it been a more 'grandiose' plan of helping other refugees and needy people, it most probably would not have been accepted by the governments involved. [184]

The considerations above also apply to the British government. The government had clearly showed its reluctance to accept responsibility for even a small number of Russian refugees and was very unwilling to enter into new commitments. The British government's decision to participate in the international refugee regime in helping Russian refugees was of course guided not only by humanitarian, but also selfish motives. The government was, for

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181 Walters 1952, p. 187: Holborn. The Annals of the American Academy. May 1939, p. 124.
182 Walters 1952, p. 188.
183 Skran 1995, p. 285.
184 Skran 1995, pp. 99-100.

instance, very eager to end its responsibilities for those Russian refugees that were still maintained in the camps and in Serbia at British expense and thus started negotiations with the High Commissioner on this aspect right after the establishment of his office.

Nevertheless, on the whole the British participation in the work of the League and High Commissioner for Russian refugees in the 1920s was quite active. After missing the initial intergovernmental conference on Russian refugees in August 1921, the government attended all the following conferences until 1928. Britain also ratified the Arrangement of 5 July 1922, regarding the identity certificates for Russian refugees, although this was not the case with the subsequent Arrangements relating to Russian refugees in the 1920s. Financially, the British actually provided more assistance for Russian refugees in Constantinople than any other member state of the League. At the level of individuals, the British participation was perhaps even more active. Many prominent workers in the refugee field in the early 1920s were British nationals, among them were, for example, Sir Samuel Hoare, Colonel Procter, Philip Noel-Baker, Sir Horace and Lady Rumbold and General Harington. Similarly, a number of British private organisations worked actively for the assistance of refugees.

Still, it is clear that the British government employed a 'double standard' in the Russian refugee question. Although the government participated in the international conferences on Russian refugees and thus implied its willingness to adopt a common practice towards them, at no point was the government prepared to make concessions to the individual policies it had adopted in the Russian refugee question. The ratification of the agreement on identity certificates, for example, had no impact on the policies of the government regarding the admission of Russian refugees to Britain. It was carefully pointed out by the government that its acceptance of the agreement did not in any way hinder the control of the entry of Russian refugees. On the contrary, it was believed that the certificates would facilitate an even more effective control.

In the latter part of the 1920s Britain also ceased to participate in the intergovernmental conferences and failed to ratify the Arrangements on Russian refugees. Furthermore, the British government did not appoint a delegate to the Refugee Section of the ILO, or later to the Nansen Office, as it had previously done under the High Commissioner for Russian Refugees [185]. This might well be due to the fact that the Russian refugee question was not considered of utmost importance in Britain because of the small number of refugees in the country. However, it is also possible that after the British government managed to end its responsibility for those refugees it had been maintaining in the camps, it had less 'international' interest in the Russian refugee problem.

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185 Skran 1995, p. 118.

CHAPTER 6: RUSSIAN ÉMIGRÉS AND BRITISH SOCIETY

The final chapter of my thesis will explore the Russian émigré community that was born in Britain after the Bolshevik Revolution and the Civil War. The earlier chapters have shown that the British government clearly adopted a strict policy of non-admittance in relation to Russian refugees. This policy was naturally fundamental in the development of the Russian émigré community; its size and make-up.

According to the report by Dr. Goldenweiser, compiled for the Refugee Survey of Sir John Simpson, the strict immigration laws and the difficult economic situation meant that mass emigration of Russian refugees to Britain was impossible. He also stated that all this had influenced what kind of people could come to Britain and continued that they were mainly from higher social classes; businessmen, intellectuals and nobility. Additionally, many had emigrated to Britain already during the war. [1]

Even if the popular stereotypes of the Russian émigrés, such as that they were all nobles and princes, are as wide of the mark in the British case, as they are in general, it is nevertheless probably true that the émigré community in Britain was somewhat more homogeneous in its composition, than for example those in France, Germany or Yugoslavia. This was largely due to the selective policies of the British authorities, which determined what kind of people could come to Britain. Nevertheless, as in other countries of emigration, the majority of Russian émigrés in Britain were faced with economic difficulties when starting their new lives in exile.

The following chapter will outline the characteristics of this émigré community. The chapter will concentrate on the early stages of émigré lives in the 1920s. Attention will be drawn to the legal status of Russian émigrés in Britain, to Russian organisations that existed, to the Orthodox Church and its role in preserving the Russian identity of the émigrés. The chapter will evaluate how the émigrés managed to adapt to life in Britain and what kind of relationship they had with British society. Comparisons to better

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[1] Goldenweiser 1938, p. 1. Refugee Survey 1937-38. Special Reports VI. Law (2). Royal Institute of International Affairs.

known émigré communities, such as that in France, will be made in order to point out similarities and differences between different host countries.

6.1. The Legal Status of Russian Refugees

The question of the legal status of refugees has already been partly considered in the earlier chapters, primarily as regards to the processes at the time of the entry, such as landing and residence permits, employment, passport and visa practices. It has also been noticed that in the international level Britain ratified for example the Arrangement of 5 July 1922, on travel and identity documents for Russian refugees.

In his report Dr. Goldenweiser pointed out that the legal situation of Russian refugees in Britain reflected the English legal system. Compared to the bureaucratic legal system in the continent, the British system was based on individual treatment of cases, on personal references and on the personal judgement of the government official. According to him there was sympathy for victims of political persecution, but on the other hand, a national egoistic attitude clearly prevailed, especially towards employment. There is nothing very surprising in this view; the practices of the British government in relation to the admission and employment of refugees and immigrants clearly witnessed these principles.

Generally speaking, Russian refugees in Britain did not have any special status in comparison to other foreigners. All the aliens in Britain fell under the provisions of the Aliens Order, 1920. The practices that followed after the landing were also clearly formulated by immigration legislation. After the Immigration Officer, who was an official of the Home Office, had approved the landing of an alien, a landing permit was issued. To this permit any additional conditions were added under which the alien/refugee was allowed to remain in the country, such as the time he was allowed to

stay in country, instructions that the alien should not take employment during his stay without special permission, etc. [2]

Under Article 6, Part II of the Aliens Order, 1920, all aliens in Britain were obliged to register with the registration officer of the district in which they were resident. In the registration a special certificate was provided which gave a legitimisation to stay in Britain.[3] For the actual residence permit, the alien had to apply to the Aliens Branch of the Home Office, which was solely responsible for issuing residence permits. The residence permits were normally first granted only for a short period not exceeding a year, after which period they could be renewed for further periods of a year or less. Only after the several years of residence would the permit be made unlimited as regards to the period of residence.[4]

It has been already earlier pointed out that the aliens were not admitted to work in Britain, unless a permit for that was issued by the Ministry of Labour. As we have seen, it was clearly stated by the Home Secretary that 'under present conditions aliens should not have facilities to come to this country for the purpose of employment'.[5] Although individual exceptions were made especially towards those with important businesses in Britain, generally this rule was strictly followed.

The restriction to take employment was usually added to the permit of residence, and it was sometimes only after several years of residence that this condition was cancelled. [6] It was particularly for this reason that the Home Office wanted to ascertain that persons admitted were able to support themselves, or supported by someone in Britain. However, since it is clear that not very many Russian émigrés in Britain actually could support themselves for a long period without acquiring employment, the restrictions regarding employment could not be strictly observed in the long run. Very few émigrés actually managed to bring much money, or pieces of property with them, even if in

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2 Goldenweiser 1938, pp. 2-5. Refugee Survey 1937-38. Special Reports VI. Law (2); Bentwich, p.4. Refugee Survey 1937-38, Vol. V. Refugees and the Law (1). Royal Institute of International Affairs.
3 Aliens Order, 1920. Statutory Rules and Orders 1920, Vol. I, pp. 142-43.
4 Bentwich, p. 5. Refugee Survey 1937-38, Vol. V. Refugees and the Law (1); Simpson 1939, pp. 268-69.
5 FO 371/1262, File 74855, Paper 81955. HO to FO 29.5.1919. PRO.
6 Simpson 1939, pp. 268-69.

Russia some might have held large possessions. Most of them had to leave very quickly and without their possessions, perhaps bringing only some jewellery. [7] Transferring money or property from Soviet Russia to the west proved in many cases extremely difficult. Even if some émigrés had possessions or investments in Britain, or some other European countries, this was not the case with the majority of émigrés.

Baron Aleksander Meyendorff, a well-known Russian lawyer and the vice president of the third Russian Duma explained the difficulties of this in his interview with *The Daily Telegraph* in March 1919, soon after his arrival at England. Meyendorff stated that getting money out of bank accounts had already become more difficult in summer 1917, and there were certain daily limits on the amount that could be withdrawn from personal accounts. For transferring money abroad, a permit from the Ministry of Labour was needed. At the beginning of Bolshevik rule, people who had savings were paid a certain amount of money every month, but this also changed during 1918, and it was only possible to get money out if some local soldier or worker proved that you had no other income. The gold and diamond reserves stayed as a property of the banks. [8]

European banks managed to assist émigrés to some degree in the process of getting money out of Russia, but they were not always successful, either, and of course not all émigrés had large savings in their accounts in Russia. Baron Meyendorff himself, while still living in St. Petersburg and Riga, tried several times to get some savings and property of his mother, as well as his own personal property, out of Russia. His mother, Princess Olga Gorchakov, had lived in Rome since 1882, but she still had large possessions deposited at Russian banks. In the end Meyendorff managed to transfer some money abroad. However, in practice, getting money and property out of Russia was very difficult. Baron Meyendorff himself was approached several times by various Russia émigrés, who asked his advice on this. [9]

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[7] Horsbrugh-Porter, Anna. Memories of Revolution. Russian Women Remember. London and New York 1993, p. 104: Interview of Olga Lawrence.

[8] Interview of Baron Meyendorff for the Daily Telegraph 3.3.1919. Meyendorff collection, Box 9. Finnish National Archives in Helsinki.

[9] Muotka,Virva. Baron Meyendorff and Russian Emigrants in Europe between 1919 and 1939, pp. 32-33, 40-41, 46-47. Unpublished M.A. dissertation at the University of Joensuu, Department of History, March 1997. (In Finnish)

In practice many émigrés in Britain faced financial difficulties, especially at the beginning of their lives in exile. Different Russian organisations, such as the Russian Red Cross (old organisation) worked actively in helping émigrés. In the long run, the main solution would have to be finding suitable employment for those without means to support themselves. It has to be remembered that the British law was actually somewhat more favourable than those of most other European countries, in that there were no restrictions of aliens working for example in many liberal professions, such as doctors, dentists, or barristers. [10] Thus, according to Petr Shilovskii, a Russian émigré in Britain, 'there were nothing comparable to the tedious restrictions on employment that prevailed in France'. [11]

As a practice towards the Nansen passport, it was stated that the British government did not demand that Russian refugees in Britain had to hold a Nansen certificate while they were residing in Britain, only when they wanted to travel abroad. [12] Every alien who did not have national passport could also apply a certificate of identity. The fee for issuing the identity certificate was seven shillings and 6 d. and that of the 'Nansen stamp', affixed to the Nansen certificate, five shillings. [13]

Since the British government had promised to grant visas free of charge for those refugees who could not pay the fee, and since the Nansen certificate was internationally recognised certificate of identity, it could be assumed that it would have become the most popular form of identity certificate. However, there are no statistics on the application of the system of Nansen certificate in Britain. This does not necessarily mean that the system did not operate in Britain but might be due to the lack of statistics, as well as the fact that the number of Russian refugees in Britain was generally smaller than in many other countries.

The system regarding the practice of the Nansen certificate and its use as a identity certificate was quite similar, for example, in France and Yugoslavia. Also in these

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10 Bentwich, p. 5. Refugee Survey 1937-38, Vol. V. Refugees and the Law (1).
11 Shilovsky, Pyotr Petrovich in Glenny and Stone 1990, p. 293.
12 Simpson 1939, p. 267.
13 Goldenweiser 1938, p. 4. Refugee Survey 1937-38. Special Reports VI. Law (2).

countries the government authorities did not require Russian émigrés to be in a possession of a Nansen passport while staying in within the territory, but only if they wished to travel abroad. [14] As stated earlier, the French authorities also continued to recognise V.A. Maklakov's 'Office Central' in Paris and the local 'Offices Russes' as successors of the old Russian government, and these offices were empowered to issue various certificates for Russian refugees. Their status as representatives of Russian refugees was properly legalised by the French government at the beginning of 1925, shortly after their diplomatic recognition of the Soviet government. Instructions of the Interior Ministry to the departmental prefects stated that the 'Office Central' of V.A. Maklakov could intervene on behalf of stateless Russians before bureaucratic bodies.[15]

In Britain the old Russian diplomatic offices were not granted similar legal status by the government as the 'Offices Russes' in France. However, the Russian Embassy and the Consulate in London continued to represent the Russian refugees 'unofficially'. Thus, the British government continued to consider these offices, as well as certain people, such as K. Nabokov and E. Sablin, as representatives of Russian émigrés in Britain, even though they could not maintain their official status after the Bolshevik Revolution.

At the beginning of 1924 the first British Labour government granted *de jure* recognition to the Soviet Government. As a consequence, the Russian émigrés held a meeting at the old Russian Embassy at Chesham House, representing several Russian organisations in Britain. At the meeting it was unanimously decided that E. Sablin, the former Russian *Chargé d'Affaires*, would be requested to assume the representation of the rights and interests of the Russian émigré colony, and to be their spokesman ' in all matters which may have to be submitted to the British authorities'.

The resolution was signed by fourteen different Russian organisations; the Orthodox Paris Council, Russian Academic Group, Manufactures and Merchants' Associations, Economic Society, Relief Fund, Army & Navy Ex-Service Men's Mutual Provident Association, Society for Invalids and Disabled, United Council of the Russian Red

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14 Simpson 1939, p. 267.
15 Johnston 1988, p. 68: Simpson 1939, pp. 299-300.

Cross and Russian Charity Organisations in G.B, Russian Refugees Relief Association, Self-Help Association, Labour Bureau, Doctors' Association, Self-Help Association for Refugees from North Russia, Sisterhood of St. Xenia, and Russian Red Cross Society (old organisation). Sablin complied with the request of these groups, and the British Home Office and the Foreign Office were informed of the resolution. [16]

In his letter to the Foreign Office Sablin transmitted a copy of the resolution of the Russian organisations and pointed out that these organisations had been constituted with a view to assisting Russian refugees in the education of children, relief to the needy, medical assistance, maintenance of church services, and in support of aged and invalid people. He also expressed the hope that the British government would extend to Russian refugees and their organisations 'the same benevolent and kind attitude as it had in the past'.[17]

The Foreign Office considered the whole issue very carefully, and in the Minutes it was pointed out that the Foreign Office should perhaps be very careful in accepting the phrase 'their rights and interests'. It was also stated that even though it was true that under Soviet law Russian émigrés did not enjoy Soviet citizenship, the British government none the less should 'walk warily'. [18]

More importantly, in May 1924 the Soviet *Chargé d'Affaires*, Mr. Rakovskii, approached the Foreign Office with an enquiry relating to the article that had appeared in *The Poslednie Novosti*, émigré journal in Paris. This article had alleged that White Russians were in very good relations with the British Foreign Office and enjoyed its support. Some extracts of the article were presented by the Soviet representative, stating that after the British recognition of the Soviet government in early 1924, the Chairmen of fourteen Russian organisations asked Sablin to protect their rights and interests. He was said to have handed this resolution to the Foreign Office, happy with the fact that the Russian non-Bolshevik colony had extended its confidence to the old diplomatic

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16 Curriculum vitae of E.V. Sablin. Sablin family, MS. 1285. Leeds Russian Archive; Goldenweiser 1938, p. 3. Refugee Survey 1937-38. Special Reports VI. Law (2).
17 FO 371/10466, File 17, Paper N 1306. Sabline to Mr. Gregory 12.2.1924. PRO.
18 Ibid. FO Minutes.

representative. It was also stated that G. Gregory, chief of the Northern Department of Foreign Affairs, had sent Sablin a letter informing him that he would be glad to see Sablin at any time to discuss confidentially any questions concerning the interests of Russian organisations. Furthermore, he was said to have assured Sablin that the attitude of the British government towards Russian refugees would continue to be as courteous as before. In the last point it was mentioned, that the Russian Embassy was now being called ' The Chief Bureau of Assistance to Russian Refugees'.[19]

The Foreign Office responded to the letter of Mr. Rakovskii by transmitting him a copy of the letter from Sablin and the reply of the Foreign Office. It was pointed out that from these it could be observed that the question of the non-recognition of the Soviet Union by Russian organisations was not raised in Sablin's letter. Furthermore, it was pointed out that the 'idea of regarding Sablin as a representative of the rights and interests of Russian organisations was expressly demurred to and that unofficial relationship was asked for and granted solely on social and charitable grounds'. [20]

Mr. Rakovskii replied to the Foreign Office that the Soviet government did not have any doubt that the information given in *The Poslednie Novosti* was an invention. However, it was pointed out that late Tsarist organisations under title 'pursuing purely philanthropic aims' were in reality engaged in political activities. Rakovskii continued that the sole object in communicating with the Foreign Office was to draw the attention of the British government to the intrigues of the late Tsarist officials, which, according to the Soviet view, 'if not struck at the root in the beginning, may have a detrimental effect upon the development of the Anglo-Soviet relations'.[21] The implications of this comment are quite clear, and were obviously not missed at the Foreign Office, either. Nevertheless, a reply does not seem to have been made.

The issue of the status of the former Russian diplomatic offices was also raised by the new Labour government. After the resolution of the Russian organisations in 1924,

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19 FO 371/10498, File 4122, Paper N 4122. Soviet Chargé d'Affaires to Foreign Secretary Ramsay McDonald 13.5.1924. PRO.
20 FO 371/10498, File 4122, Paper N 4122. FO to Mr. Rakovski, Chargé d'Affaires of USSR 21.5.1924. PRO.
21 FO 371/10498, File 4122, Paper N 4732. Mr. Rakovski to Mr. Mounsey 31.5.1924. PRO.

Sablin informed the British government that he had delegated the issues of passport, visa, work permit and naturalisation to the former Russian vice-consul, Mr. E. Gambs, who worked at the former Russian Consulate at Bedford Square. [22] This office was known as the 'Russian Refugees Relief and Travelling Permit Office' and Mr. Gambs and Mr. Onu, the former Russian Consul-General, working in this office had been issuing passports to Russians for some years. The Minutes of the Foreign Office in February 1924 stated that the position of the Bedford Square Office should be considered carefully, and that the Home Office should also be informed of any actions it was proposed to be taken.[23]

There is no information regarding the possible outcome of these considerations. However, the Labour government was short-lived, and was replaced by the Conservative government already in October 1924. As stated in the previous chapter, the Travelling Permit Office continued to function under the conservative government in the latter part of the 1920s. However, its power to issue passports was clearly diminished in the latter part of the 1920s, as other governments refused to visa passports issued by the officials of the former Russian governments. As seen earlier, the French government, for example, had informed that it would issue visas for the holders of Nansen passports. Nevertheless, the British government reply to the 1928 questionnaire of the High Commissioner for Refugees was that 'though the Russian Refugees Relief and Travelling Permit Office did not have any legal status or powers, it had continued to perform on behalf of the refugees some of the duties that would normally be undertaken by a Consul'. [24]

During the latter part of the 1920s relations between the British and Soviet governments broke down, and were only resumed during the next Labour government, which came into power in June 1929. Again, as earlier at the time of the new Labour government, there were enquiries from the side of Russian émigrés on the possible influence this might have to Russian émigrés. The Foreign Office was approached on the question by

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22 Goldenweiser 1938, p. 3. Refugee Survey 1937-38. Special Reports VI. Law (2).
23 FO 372/2093, File 1816, Paper T1816. FO Minute by Major Spencer 18.2.1924. PRO.
24 Goldenweiser 1938, p. 3. Refugee Study 1937-38. Special Reports VI. Law (2).

Mr. Lucien Wolff in December 1929.[25] The Foreign Office, for its part, approached the Home Office on the issue, enquiring whether the legal situation of Russian refugees in Britain would be in any way modified by the resumption of relations between the British and Soviet governments.

The Home Secretary Mr. Clynes replied that he generally concurred with the reply which the Foreign Secretary, Mr. Henderson, proposed to send to Mr. Wolff. The only correction he suggested was to replace the sentence 'it is not the intention of HMG in any way to modify the legal status of Russian refugees' by the formulation that 'HMG have no power to modify the legal status of Russian refugees in Britain'. [26] The Foreign Office informed Mr. Wolff according to these instructions, i.e. that ' HMG have no power to modify the legal status of Russian refugees, nor have they at present any intention of modifying their existing practice in regard to the issue of Nansen passport'.[27] Judged by this, it clearly seems that the practices towards Russian refugees remained quite unaltered also under the Labour government, although it has to be also acknowledged that at that time the question was not a matter of major importance any more, as the situation of Russian émigrés had become more stabilised.

In defining the legal status of refugees, the practices of the naturalisation process have also an important role. For the most part, the naturalisation practices were quite similar in most European countries after the First World War. Nevertheless, some countries had more flexible practices towards the naturalisation of Russian refugees than some others. For example in France the naturalisation practices as regards Russian refugees varied in some degree. In general, a residence of at least five years was required, and the applicant had to be at least 18 years old. Moreover, as a rule, young men who would be liable for military service, agricultural labourers and families with many children were favoured, while single men and the elderly were not. [28]

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25 FO 371/14052, File 5773, Paper N 5773. Mr. Lucien Wolff to FO 6.12.1929. PRO.
26 FO 371/14977, File 294, Paper W 294. HO to FO 8.1.1930.
27 FO 371/14977, File 294, Paper W 1330. FO to Mr. Wolff 14.2.1930. PRO.
28 Simpson 1939, p. 315, 599.

On the other hand children born in France automatically became French citizens, the practice that was not automatically followed in some other countries. For example, according to the naturalisation laws in Czechoslovakia, children born in the country did not gain the Czechoslovak nationality if their parents were not nationals of the country. Also a woman marrying an alien might lose her own nationality. In Yugoslavia naturalisation was quite easy until 1933, after which the rules became much stricter. The treatment of Russian refugees in Yugoslavia was nevertheless exceptionally generous, as they were granted all the rights of ordinary citizens. The same applied to Bulgaria. In both countries children also became automatically citizens of the country. [29]

In Britain the naturalisation practice as regards Russian refugees, as well as regards all aliens, came under the British Nationality and Status of Aliens Act 1914. According to Article 2 of this Act, an alien could get a Certificate of Naturalisation if he had lived for at least five years in Britain or in the dominions, was considered to have 'a good character', a genuine knowledge of English, and wanted to become resident in Britain or to enter state services. Normally, however, around seven years' residence was required before naturalisation was granted. The requirement of ' a good character' and the personal qualities on the whole were carefully observed.

An application for nationality status was made to the Home Secretary, and it had to be supported by sponsors that were British born. It was also required that the applicant published advertisements in a newspaper, so that people who might have some criticism against the applicant could contact the Home Secretary. The grant of the application was in the absolute discretion of the Home Secretary and therefore totally dependent upon his personal impression of the applicant, and of the quality of the personal references of the applicant. Also, the grant of nationality to an alien did not necessarily mean that the practice was extended to his wife. The practice was that the wife of the applicant had to make a special declaration to become a British subject. A certificate of naturalisation could, however, be granted to the dependants of the applicant. Under the Nationality and

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29 Ibid., pp. 237, 315, 389-90; Simpson 1938. 'The Refugee Problem'. International Affairs, Vol. XVII, No. 5, September-October 1938, pp. 611-12.

Status of Aliens Act of 1914, all children born in Britain were automatically British subjects.

Again, it is difficult to state the exact number of Russian émigrés that were naturalised in the 1920s, especially as naturalised Russians were not divided into specific categories, i.e. Jewish, 'White Russians', etc. Thus there are no statistics on the naturalisation of Russian refugees from the Bolshevik regime. In Goldenweiser's study it is estimated that approximately 300 Russian refugees were naturalised per year. If this figure refers only to post-revolutionary Russian refugees, it can be considered quite high. According to Goldenweiser the British naturalisation practice could be considered quite benevolent. Also Simpson in his Refugee Survey (1939) stated that many Russian émigrés in Britain had been naturalised.[30]

Generally speaking, the fact that the naturalisation of Russian émigrés in Britain may have been quite common might be at least partly be explained by the smallness of the émigré community. The question of naturalisation can by no means be considered simply through the degree of difficulty of the process in host countries. To a large extent it was also a question of the willingness of the émigrés to naturalise. Many émigrés actually felt that naturalisation was a 'betrayal of their Russian identity', and their uppermost concern was fear of denationalisation, or assimilation. [31] These feelings seem to have been especially strong in the countries which hosted large number of émigrés. Naturally in those countries it was easier for émigrés to stay isolated from the host community and to remain within their 'own' community. This, on its part strengthened the feelings of 'exclusiveness' and 'Russianness' among Russian émigrés. In countries where the émigrés constituted only a small group, such as in Britain, they could not stay similarly isolated from the host society and therefore might not have held as strong opinions against assimilation or naturalisation.

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30 Goldenweiser 1938, pp. 12-13. Refugee Survey 1937-38. Special Reports VI. Law (2); Simpson 1939, pp. 237, 339, 600.
31 Raeff 1991, p. 42.

6.2. Russian and Anglo-Russian Organisations

Very little research has been done on different organisation established by Russian émigrés in Britain. Since there were only a small number of émigrés, it has also been assumed that there were very few, if any, Russian organisations. This is actually to a great extent a false assumption, although in many cases it is very difficult to find detailed information on these organisations. Nevertheless, contrary to the general supposition, there were several different Russian émigré organisations functioning in Britain in the early 1920s.

The primary focus of Russian émigrés in the UK was the old Embassy and Consulate services. As mentioned, these old diplomatic organisations continued to represent Russians unofficially in various matters. According to Konstantin Nabokov, at the time of the Revolution, Russian society in Britain consisted of two different groups. The first group consisted of the officials of the Russian government during the war, predominately monarchists who were hostile even towards the Provisional government, and dreamt about the return to the old regime. Nabokov stated this group consisted of approximately 500 persons. Some of them returned to Russia after the February Revolution.

The second group, on the other had, consisted of political elements that were anti-monarchist. [32] Of these only a few were socialists and the majority of the representatives of the Provisional government, those occupying posts at the Embassy and the Consulates, supported liberal and republican forms of government. The Russian émigrés who left Russia after the Bolshevik Revolution and the Civil War consisted of different anti-Bolshevik elements, varying from socialist groups to the strict monarchists.

In Britain the majority of the émigrés who were active in the political arena seemed to have represented the 'liberal' fractions rather than strict monarchists. Among the 'ordinary' émigrés, however, those who held monarchist convictions constituted an important part of émigré society. It seems that the British government also wanted to

32 Kaznina 1997, p. 20.

restrict the entry of 'politically active monarchists'. For example in early 1919 Mr. Pedder from the Home Office had stated that there are clear objections to admission of people who were likely to carry on monarchist propaganda.[33]

After the February Revolution many Russians who had been living abroad, especially those who had been the opponents of the Tsarist regime, wanted to return to Russia. London became a destination for Russian subjects from other European countries, wishing to return to Russia. This was largely due to the fact that 'normal' route through Germany was closed due to war and there was the possibility to travel to Russia via ship to Norway and then to Archangel or Petrograd. To facilitate the repatriation a committee was established which was attached to the Embassy under the title of the Russian Delegates Committee. The Chairman of the Committee was I.M. Maiskii and the Secretary G.V. Chicherin. What the Provisional government was not aware of was the fact that the Committee consisted of supporters of the Bolsheviks, such as Chicherin and Maiskii. Chicherin's anti-war activities were nevertheless too much to the British government. In August 1917 he was arrested and later returned to Russia.[34] As pointed out in Chapter 4, the Russian Delegates Committee nevertheless continued to assist in the repatriation of Russians in Britain, largely consisting of the families of those Jews who had returned to Russian under the Military Convention.

During the War the Russian Government Committee had been established under the auspices of the Embassy and Chairmanship of General Germonius with the dual aim to facilitate trade and defence purposes.[35] After the Bolsheviks came to power, the British government decided to end this committee, since it could not function at an official level any more. At the same time, the money belonging to the former Russian government, deposited in London, was sequestrated by the order of the British Treasury. This was in line with the decision that the money belonged to the legal successor of the Russian government and at that moment there was no such government recognised by Britain. [36]

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33 FO 371/3968, File 176, Paper 28740. Russian refugees. Memorandum on question of allowing them to enter UK. PRO.
34 Holmes, p. 13, 16. In Slatter (ed.) 1984; Kaznina 1997, pp. 20-21.
35 Kudriakova 1995, pp. 11-12.
36 FO 371/3989, File 3191. Memorandum No. 2 by Sir George Buchanan, February 1919. PRO.

A few other organisations were established in Britain before the Bolshevik Revolution, or in the immediate aftermath of the Revolution, mostly for the purpose of co-operation between Britain and Russia in the areas of culture, education and politics, and to facilitate trade and businesses between these two countries. Some were Anglo-Russian in the composition of their membership.

Among these 'early' Russian and Anglo-Russian organisations in Britain was the Russo-British 1917 Bratstvo (Fraternity), established immediately after the February Revolution and continued until the end of 1921. It was established by members of the British Parliament and representatives of Russian governmental organisations in Britain.[37] The President of the Club was Lloyd George, and the Chairman of the Provisional Committee of the Bratstvo was Sir Paul Vinogradov, the professor of medieval history at Oxford. Other members of the Provisional Committee were Professors Gardner and S.P Tiurin, representative of the Union of Zemstvos and Towns at the Russian Government Committee and the chairman of the Union of 'Russian Commonwealth', and A. MacCallum Scott and J. O'Grady, both members of the House of Commons.

The stated aims of the organisation were 'to commemorate the great change in the status of Russian people which commenced with the February Revolution of 1917, and to afford a medium through which the two great democracies of Russia and Britain may be brought into closer relations with each other '.[38] After the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, the organisation adopted a strong anti-Bolshevik stance. For its activities the Bratstvo rented an accommodation at 26 Chester Square, conveniently close both to the Houses of Parliament and the Russian Embassy. [39]

The Russo-British Bratstvo was quite elitist in its composition, since its membership consisted mainly of high political actors. The Bratstvo also only accepted men as is members, although in the Relief Committee established under the auspices of the

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37 Kaznina 1997, p. 26.
38 Tyurin, Sergei Petrovich, MS. 1274, file 73: Russo- British 1917 Bratstvo, October 1917. Leeds Russian Archive; Kaznina 1997, p. 27.
39 Kaznina 1997, p. 26.

Bratstvo, there was also a 'Ladies Section'. The Provisional Committee of the Bratstvo remained quite unaltered during the organisation's whole existence. In July 1919 Sir Paul Vinogradov continued as the Chairman; Gardner, Tiurin, O'Grady and Scott as members. New members were M.A. Kedrov and I.V. Shklovskii, the former correspondent of the Russkiya Viedomosti and Sir Francis Lowe and Colonel Pryce Jones. In December 1919 A.F. Meyendorff, the Vice-President of the third Duma, Vladimir D. Nabokov, leading member of the Kadet Party, Professor Rostovtsev, specialist in the ancient history in Oxford and A. M. Onu, the Russian Consul-General, were also invited to be members of the Committee.[40]

Included in the list of members can also be found E.V. Sablin and P.I. Ignatiev, the former Minister of Education who had represented the government of the Admiral Kolchak in Britain; General E.K. Germonius; E. Gambs; Colonel N.T. Beliaev, the professor of Russian history; S.L. Poliakov-Litovtsev, the editor of the 'Russian Commonwealth' in London; and B.V. Telepnev, a member of the Russian Government Committee. All of those mentioned were well-known and influential Russian political and intellectual figures of the then existing Russian émigré colony in Britain. In addition, many other prominent Russians also regularly visited the meetings of the Bratstvo, such as Konstantin Nabokov, N. Chaikovskii, the head of North Russian government that had been supported by the British and G. Volkov, the Russian naval attaché at the old Russian Embassy.

As a rule, British nationals could only join Bratstvo if they were members of one of the Houses of the Parliament, although some exceptions were made to this rule. The majority of the members of the Bratstvo were nevertheless Russians. For example, at the end of 1919, there were 150 members at the Bratstvo, and of them only about twenty were English. Nevertheless, many English who were active in Russian affairs, such as Bernard Pares and Harold Williams, were often present at the club, even though they were not official members.[41]

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40 Kaznina 1997, pp. 26-27, 29.
41 Ibid., p. 28.

Besides the different sections, commissions and committees of the Bratstvo, different clubs were also created under its auspices. Many Russian, as well as British members of the Bratstvo participated in the British Russia Club. The Club was established in early 1918 as an 'unofficial' organisation for the co-operation of Russian emigrants and British politicians, economists and other influential persons. [42] The chairman of the Club was Sir George Buchanan.

The main interest of the British Russia Club was to promote trade and businesses between Britain and non-Bolshevik Russia. The British Russia Club also assisted British refugees arriving from Russia and acted as a representative of this group. The Club stated as its other aims as maintaining and furthering friendly relations between Russia and Britain; providing an authoritative body upon Russian matters and the co-operation and support of the British government. It was also stated that the club avoided 'entering realms of purely political significance'. The members of the Club were mostly businessmen, and therefore the business aspect clearly became the main interest of the club, especially with a view of strengthening the position of Britain in Russian trade, and guarding it from the aggressive trade policies of Germany. [43]

Despite the somewhat elitist composition of the Bratstvo it nevertheless engaged in practical work, for example in assisting intellectuals and their families in leaving Russia. They made lists of persons who were to have priority assistance getting out of Russia. These lists consisted mainly of members of the Duma; of officials of the former Ministries of Foreign and Internal Affairs; and of other prominent persons. In this issue the Bratstvo co-operated with the Foreign Office in Britain. [44]

Assisting prominent Russians to leave Russia was also a question that occupied the work of the Committee of the Russian Relief and Reconstruction Fund, the British organisation established in 1918 for the co-operation of Britain and Russia in the reconstruction of Russia. It also made lists of the persons who were considered to be in the 'most imminent Bolshevik danger' and strongly urged that all possible steps were

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42 Kaznina 1997, p. 32.
43 The Russian Outlook, No. 1, Vol. 1, 10 May, p. 11.
44 Kaznina 1997, pp. 28-31.

taken by the British government to save these people from this danger. Additionally it pointed out the importance of taking all possible steps for the evacuation of other Russian refugees. [45] As noted in earlier chapters, these considerations were not followed very carefully by the British government.

The Russo-British Bratstvo also devoted much of its energy to educational questions, for example in the educational co-operation of Britain and Russia and the education of young Russians. The Educational Committee was chaired by Sir Paul Vinogradov. It arranged conferences to deal with questions of the ways and means of teaching Russian language, history, economics and other areas in Britain, as well as to the possibilities of sending British students to study in Russia. The Committee also used its efforts to facilitate the admission of Russian students to the institutions of higher education in Britain.[46] The Bratstvo also organised lectures on various topics relating to Russian history, geography, language, legal and social conditions, industry, etc., and among the lecturers were Professors Miliukov, Gardner, Tiurin and Pavlovskii, as well as Baron Meyendorff. [47]

The Bratstvo also worked for the assistance of Russian refugees in finding suitable employment. In this work it was assisted by many other Russian organisations, such as Zemgor. The Headquarters of Zemgor were in Paris, but it also had representatives in Britain.[48] In July 1920 the question of finding suitable employment for Russian émigrés was discussed in detail at a meeting of Bratstvo. To further their efforts a joint meeting was called by the Bratstvo and Zemgor, where representatives of various Russian groups, institutions and prominent persons were to be invited both in the UK and abroad.

At the meeting of 9 July it was decided that a proper organ was needed for uniting the different Russian institutions and organisations abroad. It was also decided to create a Provisional London Committee for the establishment of the new organisation. As an

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45 Pares collection, PAR/ 5/3/1. List of persons considered to be in imminent danger from Bolsheviks. SSEES.
46 The Russian Commonwealth, Vol. 1, Nos. 5-6, 20 January 1919, pp. 145-148; Kaznina, 1997, p. 31.
47 The Russian Outlook, No. 8, Vol. 1, 28 June 1919; Kaznina 1997, p. 36.
48 Rudnev, V. The Educational Work of the Russian Zemstvos and Towns Relief Committee. Paris [n.d], p. 5; Kudriakova 1995, p. 14.

outcome of this and subsequent meetings, 'The Head Committee of the Russian refugee affairs' was established in London, as well as a local committee, also in London, to take care of the question of employment in Britain. Local committees were also to be established in other countries. [49]

It was stated that the central and local committees were to be created to provide help in the question of employment for Russian refugees through the complete autonomy of organisations and institutions that were invited to participate in their work. Owing to the acuteness of the problem of finding employment for refugees, the Head Committee tried to define priority groups for assistance. At the meeting of the Committee in October 1920 it was decided that in view of the insufficient funds only women, students, elderly, i.e. those, who were not 'in a position to join the ranks of the armies', or find work independently, could be included in the group to be assisted in the first place. This information was forwarded to as advice to the local committees. [50] Unfortunately, no records are left about the results of the work of Committee in this field.

As the Bratstvo united Russians with various political views and its meetings were constantly visited by various prominent members of the Russian émigré community, it actually had unifying role in the life of the Russian émigré colony. It for example made an initiative to unite the existing Russian voluntary organisations in London by creating 'a Council of Russian Societies'. Information about this project was sent to various Russian organisations in Britain, such as the Union of ' Russian Commonwealth' (Narodopratstvo), Russian Circle in London, Russian Liberation Committee and Russian National Committee. [51] The United Russian Council, which was established in early 1920 was most likely a product of this initiative. The Council was to act as an intermediary organ to bring together the various Russian organisations and political groupings in order to 'give opportunity to a free discussion and the establishment of common ground of United Russian opinion'. [52]

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49 Kudriakova 1995, pp. 18-19.
50 Kudriakova 1995, p. 20.
51 Kaznina 1997, p. 29.
52 The New Russia, Vol. 1, No. 1, 5 February, pp. 28-29.

The United Council managed to absorb quite a large part of the Russian organisations in London. On the other hand the Council did not always manage to make united decisions. This could be seen, for example, at the time of the resolution of the United Council, opposing the change of policy of the British government towards White Russian armies as well as the resumption of trade with Soviet Russia. This resolution was signed by only five Russian organisations, as some organisations that had initially supported the Council withdrew their support.[53]

The questions of the education, employment and other social, political and cultural questions also guided the work of many other Russian, as well as few British organisations. Among these was, for example, the Russian Academic Group in Britain, established in 1918. The Academic Group in Britain was among the very first organisations abroad for uniting academic émigrés and similar groups were soon established in other countries, influenced by the British example. M.I. Rostovtsev, specialist in ancient history in Oxford, who also worked actively at the Bratstvo, had an important role in the creation of the Group. [54]

The chairman of the group was Professor V. Korenchevskii, a doctor of medicine, and the Vice-Chairmans Professors B.V. Heroys or V.I. Isaev. The president of the group was Sir Paul Vinogradov, Treasurer A.M. Onu and Secretary Nicholas Hans. A requirement for the membership was that the members held a degree of Doctor or Master, were members of the Academy of Science and worked either as a Professor, lecturer or teacher in Britain. A list of the Russian Academic Group in Britain, probably from late 1918 or early 1919, contains twenty- one names [55]. The funds of the group consisted mainly of membership fees paid annually by the members as well as sums raised by collections, donations, etc. [56] The Academic Group was located in several different places during its existence. Initially it had premises in Bedford Square, where

53 The New Russia, Vol. 1, No. 5, 4 March, pp. 156-57.
54 Kaznina 1995, p. 35; Raeff 1990, p. 60.
55 Pares collection, PAR/7/1/1. Russian Academic Group in Great Britain. SSEES.
56 Stow Hill (Soskice) Papers, DS.1, Box 5. R.A.G/1 (Russian Academic Group). House of Lords Record Office.

the Russian Consulate was located, and later in Cromwell Road, also near the Consulate.[57]

As its aims the Russian Academic Group concentrated on uniting the Russian literary and scientific workers who had found refuge and hospitality in Great Britain; establishing connections with scientific circles in Britain and with Russian Academic organisations in other countries as well as helping its members to continue their studies and research and to improve their material conditions. It also wanted to provide for the needs of Russian students in Britain and to assist in the provisions of adequate educational facilities for the children of Russian refugees in Britain, as well as to help Russian scientific workers and students in Russia. A separate committee for the Relief of Russian Student Refugees was established to take care of the questions of Russian students. It was chaired by E. Sablin, the Vice-Chairman was Count G.P. Beningsen and the Honorary Treasurer A.M. Onu. [58]

In 1922 another organisation was established for the relief of Russian intellectuals, the Committee for the Relief of Russian Intellectuals, also chaired by Sir Paul Vinogradov. It, however, mostly concentrated its help on starving intellectuals in Russia. In this the Committee worked in co-operation with the American Relief Association and the Universities Committee of the Imperial Relief Fund.[59] In 1921 the Russian Public Committee for Famine Relief was established by Russian émigrés in London. The Committee continued to exist until October 1922. The composition of the Committee again consisted of prominent members of the émigré community such as Vinogradov, Gardner, Meyendorff, Isaev, Tiurin, Tyrkova-Williams and Shklovskii. [60]

References have already been made to the Central Russian Committee (CRC) of Sir George Buchanan and its Educational Sub-Committee. The Educational Sub-Committee was established during 1918, chaired by Bernard Pares, who in 1919 became the

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57 Riley papers, MS 2347, f. 132. Letter from the Russian Academic group, 30 Bedford Square, 5.9.1923. Lambeth Palace library; Kaznina 1997, p. 35.
58 Stow Hill (Soskice) Papers, DS.1, Box 5. R.A.G/1 (Russian Academic Group). House of Lords Record Office
59 Stow Hill (Soskice) Pares, DS.2/1, Box 6. Committee for the Relief of Russian Intellectuals and DS. 6/2, Box 24. Article by B. Hollingsworth on Soskice. House of Lords Record Office.
60 Kaznina 1997, p. 34.

Professor of Russian Languages, Literature and History at the School of Slavonic Studies at King's College, and acted as a head of the school from 1922 to 1939 [61]. In addition to his active work for the 'Russian reconstruction' and training suitable British and Russian persons for this, he also helped Russian students to come to study in Britain.

The Educational Sub-Committee appealed to the British educational institution to accept Russian students either on reduced fees or without charge. It also made a list of children of prominent Russians whom Committee especially recommended for education in the British schools and universities. Similarly, the Committee assisted Russian scientists and literary men and other specialists in finding employment in Britain. A large number of applications were received from Russians both wishing to send their children to Britain for education and seeking employment in Britain.[62]

The results of the work of the Educational Sub-Committee regarding the education of Russian children were at least to some extent successful, as the responses of many universities were positive [63] and a number of Russian students were offered places to come to study in Britain. This was especially so of the colleges in Oxford and Cambridge, as well as King's College in London, which responded sympathetically to the appeal. Among the most 'well-known' examples of those who came to study was the son of P.B. Struve, Gleb Struve; the two elder sons of V. D. Nabokov, Sergei and Vladimir; the son of A.I. Konovalov, Sergei and the two sons of A.F. Kerenskii, Oleg and Gleb. [64] Both Vladimir and Sergei Nabokov studied in Cambridge. Sergei, however, started his studies in Oxford, together with Gleb Struve and Sergei Konovalov, who later became head of Russian department in Oxford. [65] In the latter part of the 1920s Isaiah Berlin, whose family had come to Britain in February1921, also studied in Oxford.[66]

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61 Pares collection, introduction. SSEES.
62 Pares collection PAR/7/1/1. List of Russian scientists and literary men desiring appointments abroad and Employment applications from Russians and English from Russia; PAR/7/1/2. Papers re education of Russian refugee children in Britain; PAR/7/2/3. 'Education for Russian Families', Recommendations.
63 Pares collection, PAR/6/4/3. Educational Relief for Russians. SSEES.
64 Pares collection, PAR/7/2/3. Memorandum on Russian Refugee Students; FO 371/4029, File 12476. Report of the Central Russian Committee, May 1918-September 1919; Kaznina 1997, pp. 65-68, 179-180.
65 Boyd, Brian. Vladimir Nabokov. The Russian years. London 1990, pp. 165-66, 172.
66 Ignatieff 1998, pp. 31, 46.

In 1921 it was estimated that there were about 180 Russian students in higher educational institutions in Britain. Speaking on behalf of the Conference of University Teachers of Russian, it was stated by Pares that about three quarters of these students were without any maintenance, and that they would be extremely grateful if the Imperial War Relief Fund found it possible to extend any help to Russian students in England. [67] The Universities Committee of the Imperial War Relief Fund took on the task and in the early 1920s they provided financial assistance to Russian students at British universities.[68]

Many academics also found their way to British universities and other educational institutions assisted by the Educational Sub-Committee and by Pares personally. Among them was, for example, Baron Meyendorff, who after his arrival in early 1919 first gave lessons in Russian at King's College and from 1922 to 1934 acted as Reader in Russian Institutions and Economics at the London School of Economics. Bernard Pares personally recommended Meyendorff for this post.[69] Similarly, D.S. Mirskii, who arrived in London in spring 1921, was assisted by Pares to get a professorial post at the School of Slavonic Studies at King's College. He also regularly produced articles for the Slavonic Review, edited by Pares.[70] In 1932 Mirskii, however, returned to the Soviet Union; a decision which was largely due to the fact that he had become pro-Soviet. While in Britain Mirskii was connected with the political movement called Eurasianism, which argued that Russia was neither West nor East, but Eurasia, fusion of both European and Asian elements. The movement, however, clearly leaned more toward the East, and the leftist fraction of movement came to accept the happenings in Russia, i.e. the Bolshevik Revolution, as a natural result of the basic character of the Eurasian civilisation. [71]

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67 Pares collection, PAR/7/1/3. Pares' letter to (?) 17.12.1921. SSEES.
68 Pares collection, PAR/7/1/3. Papers of the Imperial War Relief Fund, Universities Committee: help for Russian refugee students in Britain. SSEES.
69 Meyendorff collection, Boxes 2, 3. Finnish National Archives in Helsinki; Rapp. Obituary of Alexander Meyendorff. The Slavonic and East European Review, vol. 42, no. 99, June 1964, pp. 440-41.
70 Kaznina 1997, p. 120.
71 Smith, G.S (ed.). D.S. Mirsky. Uncollected Writings on Russian literature. 1989, pp. 13, 26; Williams 1972, pp. 258-60; Raeff 1990, pp. 84-85.

In early 1919 Sir George Buchanan forwarded to the Foreign Office a memorandum of the Central Russian Committee (CRC) on the position of Russians in Britain. According to the report the outbreak of the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia had introduced a new factor into the problem of Russian relief, that of the rapidly increasing number of well-to-do and middle-class Russians, who ceased to receive their usual dividends from Russia.

Sir George Buchanan also pointed out that after the withdrawal of Russia from active participation in the war the position of Russian Government officials in Britain became precarious, and the attitude of the public towards Russians became suspicious and distrustful. The sequestration of the Russian government funds at the time of the liquidation of the Russian Government Committee caused resentment among loyal Russians, officers and civil servants, who found themselves thrown out of employment, deprived of the possibility of receiving help from the funds of the Russian government. A limited advance was managed to be obtained from the Treasury for their relief. A few were successful in returning to Russia in the last days of Kerenskii regime, some were to obtain war work, but the great majority were unable to find employment.

The Russian Advisory Council, consisting of many prominent Russians such as K. Nabokov, A.M Onu and E. Gambs, and established as an auxiliary body of the CRC in July 1918, used all its efforts to assist the Russian population in Britain. Their task was to present to the CRC the cases of those Russians that were in immediate need of relief. The CRC had small sums for this at its disposal, but they were stated to be totally inadequate. The efforts of the CRC in finding employment for Russians recommended by the Council also proved fruitless.

In September 1918 the British Russian Relief Committee (BRRC) was established on the initiative of Sir George Buchanan, for the relief of destitute families of Russian officers who were fighting with the Allied forces and for the relief of both British and Russian refugees from Russia. From the beginning, the Committee was, however, faced with enormous difficulties. With limited funds at its disposal and the frequent arrival of British and Russian refugees in Britain, the resources of the Committee turned out to be

completely inadequate.[72] During the first year of its existence, the Committee nevertheless collected funds worth over £17,000. For the purpose of relief of refugees from Russia workrooms were established at the Russian Embassy by Sir George Buchanan's wife, Lady Georgina Buchanan. These workrooms aimed at providing work for Russian and British refugee women, who were said to be facing enormous difficulties in supporting themselves. [73]

In order to get donations and support for their work, the Committee published appeals in different newspapers and periodicals, for example in *The Russian Outlook*, a weekly magazine devoted to Russian and Anglo-Russian affairs, edited and managed by Stafford C. Talbot and published from May 1919 to September 1920. In its appeals it was stated that a constant stream of both British and Russian refugees from Russia was pouring into Britain, and that majority of those were in an extremely difficult situation. In its appeal of May 1919, the Committee stated that 270 British and Russian ladies were engaged in the preparation of Red Cross supplies to the Russian Volunteer Armies at the workrooms of Lady Buchanan at the Russian Embassy. The funds of the Committee, however, were insufficient to support the workrooms, and the subscriptions were needed to carry on their work. [74] Despite constant appeals, the response of the public was very limited. [75]

In the autumn of 1919 Sir George Buchanan took a diplomatic post at the British Embassy in Rome, which meant that he could no longer continue as chairman of the British Russian Relief Committee or the Central Russian Committee. He informed J.D. Gregory, the head of the Foreign Office Russia Department that these committees would have to close at the end of October, when he left for Rome. He continued that even if it was possible to find anyone to continue their work, the funds at the disposal of the Committees were insufficient for the purpose. He recommended that Mr. Gale who had acted as Secretary both to the CCR and BRRC should be employed to deal with all the

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72 FO 371/3989, File 3191. Memorandum No. 2 by Sir George Buchanan, February 1919. PRO.
73 FO 371/4029, File 125746. Sir George Buchanan to Gregory 5.9.1919. PRO.
74 The Russian Outlook, No. 3, Vol. 1, 24 May 1919, p. 51.
75 FO 371/3989, File 3191. Memorandum No. 2 by Sir George Buchanan, February 1919. PRO.

cases that might arise and need help from the Committees.[76] There is no further information relating to the Central Russian Committee. However, the BRRC seems to have been absorbed into the Russo-British Bratstvo, where it continued its work from autumn 1919. Vladimir D. Nabokov, for example, who arrived to Britain in May 1919, worked actively for the Committee.[77]

The Russian Red Cross Society (old organisation), another pre-Revolutionary organisation in addition to the Zemgor, also continued its activities in Britain in the aftermath of the war and the Bolshevik Revolution. The Russian Red Cross Society (RRCS) in Britain changed its name in 1920 to the Russian Benevolent Society, and much later in 1978 to Russian Refugees Aid Society, under which name it still works in London. Nevertheless, the old name, the Russian Red Cross Society (old organisation) was still often used at least in the 1920s.

At the meeting in May 1919 it was stated that the Russian Red Cross Society was an entirely non-political organisation. [78] The work of the Society was directed towards the financial and medical help of Russian refugees in Britain, the needs of children, as well as assisting Russian refugees in other countries.[79] The report of the Society for 1922 stated that hundreds of thousands of Russian refugees were scattered throughout Europe and that there were many thousands of Russian refugees also in Britain. Many of them had great difficulties in obtaining a livelihood and about six hundred were in urgent need of help. The funds of the Headquarters of the Russian Red Cross in Paris had been diminished. Therefore the first task of the Russian Red Cross Society in Britain had been to collect sufficient funds and secondly, to unite different charitable organisations for the help of Russian refugees. Under conditions of restricted funds, the RRCS decided to unite the three most important ones: The RRCS, the Russian Relief Fund (RRF) and the Ex-Service Men's Mutual Provident Association.[80]

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76 FO 371/4029, File 125746. Sir George Buchanan to Gregory, FO 5.9.1919, encloses reports of the Central Russian Committee and British Russian Relief Committee. PRO.
77 Kaznina 1997, p. 29; Kudriakova 1995, p. 15.
78 The Russian Outlook, No. 3, Vol. 1, 24 May, pp. 60-61.
79 Kudriakova 1995, p. 21.
80 FO 371/9347, File 91, Paper N 1700. Report of activities of Russian Red Cross Society in G.B, Russian Relief Fund and Russian Ex-Service Men's Mutual Provident Association for the year 1922. PRO.

The funds for the work of the Red Cross came largely through donations and fund raising activities. For this purpose an Entertainment Committee was established and the Grand Duchess Ksenia acted as the President of the Committee. In 1922 nine different events were arranged, including a Gala Night, ballet, concerts and balls, producing a net profit of £1,788. In November 1922, the Society took part in a Bazaar organised by the League of Nations Union at St. Albans, where articles made by Russian refugees were sold. Financially this was, however, not a profitable occasion. Instead, the yearly Christmas Bazaar, held at Chesham House, had produced a profit of over £144. This was divided between the RRC, the RRF and the Ex-Service Men's Association. A cash payment of £2,287 was received from the Russian Red Cross Head Office in Paris. The British Committee of the Russian Red Cross also assisted by £361. Adding to these sums donations and other receipts, the total funds raised year 1922 was stated to be £ 5,772.

The funds were released to the Russian Relief Fund and the Ex-service Men's Association for the relief of Russian refugees in Britain; to the Russian Refugees Relief Association for the refugees at Constantinople; to the Northern Association for the Russian Refugees born in North Russia; to the Russian Academic Group for the education of Russian children in Britain; and to the Russian Parish Church Council for maintaining the hostel for Russian refugees in London. Part of the sum received from the headquarters in Paris was allotted to the help of the Russian refugees in Britain, and part to the upkeep of the Society. Because of diminished funds from the Headquarters, the staff of the Society had to be greatly reduced, and only consisted in 1922 of the Delegate and Secretary. In August 1922 Baron Raush, the Special Delegate had resigned and Mr. D. Zinoviev [81] took his place.

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81 Uncle of Kirill Fitzlyon (Zinoviev). Kirill Fitzlyon's wife, Mrs. April Fitzlyon is the General Secretary of the Russian Refugees Aid Society, the successor of the Russian Red Cross Society. Dmitri Zinoviev worked actively at the Benevolent Society until long after the World War II. One of his greatest achievements was the purchase of two houses for elderly and invalid Russian émigrés. Also a third House was purchased in the early 1960s. D. Zinoviev died in 1963. (Reference: Obituary at The Times, 17 January 1963. Michael Glenny collection, GLE/1/1/9.) Of the three houses, two were later sold as the time reduced the number of old émigrés. One house is still kept, functioning as a hostel and old people's home at Chiswick, and taken care by the Russian Refugees Aid Society. (Reference: Interview of Kirill Fitzlyon, 29 November 1996.)

The help provided for refugees was divided into medical help, hostel, labour help, charity help (children, clothing, etc.) and help for Russian refugees abroad.[82] The Society had agreements with a few doctors to treat Russian refugees free of charge and in some cases the Red Cross paid the hospital fees. A hostel for Russian refugees was functioning at Chiswick, bought by Prince Iusopov and Mr. O. Zelenov, which until October 1922 was under the supervision of the Russian Parish Church Council. They, however, had problems finding the finance for its upkeep. In December 1922 a substantial donation was received from Sir Walter Gibbons for the maintenance of the hostel on the condition that it was handed over to the Russian Red Cross, and this was then agreed. During the last two months of 1922 there were 41 residents at the hostel. It was stated that those living in the hostel were the poorest of the refugees, to whom even the nominal charge, 2s. 3d., which was made towards the upkeep, was causing difficulties.

The Red Cross Society also tried to assist refugees in finding employment, although it was stated that there were severe difficulties in this. General relief was also provided for those in need, as well as assistance for those who wanted to emigrate elsewhere. During 1922 a total of 116 families received charity help and the total of grants amounted to £1,185. Special help was provided for children, for example, for educational purposes. The Russian Relief Fund, which had paid for the maintenance and education of the Russian children in Britain, had to discontinue their help in January 1922 owing to their lack of funds. The Russian Academic Group took part of their work and decided to organise some courses of study for the children during their holidays, and by travelling from one centre to another during the school terms. The Red Cross Society assisted them in this with the sum of £74 during 1922. Gifts of clothing were also provided to the refugees in need, and during 1922 a total of 1,287 garments were given out to 199 persons.

The RRCS also wished to draw attention to the kind attitude shown to them especially by the British Red Cross Society and the British Committee of the Russian Red Cross

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82 FO 371/9347, File 91, Paper N 1700. Report of activities of Russian Red Cross Society in G.B, Russian Relief Fund and Russian Ex-Service Men's Mutual Provident Association for the year 1922.

(BCRRC) that had assisted the work of Russian Red Cross by donations.[83] The BCRRC also assisted directly needy Russian families with weekly and monthly payments, as well as assisting in the payment of school fees. It had also participated in the Hurst farm settlement in Hedley, established in October 1920, which employed a number of Russian refugees. Owing to the financial position of the BCRRC, it was, however, stated in 1922 that the number of Russian workers on the farm had been considerably reduced. [84]

Additionally, the RRCS also wanted to thank 'several of their British friends' who had assisted in collecting funds. The Society concluded its report of the year 1922 by stating that it hoped that generous assistance of the British charity would continue in future, as in the situation of exhausted funds, their work depended entirely on their assistance'. [85]

The Russian Relief Fund, mentioned above, also actively supported Russian refugees in Britain. It had been founded in 1918 by Lady Egerton and several 'English friends in Russia', and it was affiliated to the RRCS. The general principle of the Fund was to assist and help any Russian refugees from the Bolshevik regime. The notable feature of the Fund was to provide education for Russian children in suitable schools, and to pay their school fees. The funds at the disposal were, however, also largely reduced, and during 1922 the Relief Fund was able to pay school fees only in few cases, when earlier it had managed to pay for more than 100 children. They, however, assisted by introducing Russian families to school authorities, and many were accepted on reduced fees or even free of charge. The Fund also assisted those refugees who wanted to go abroad; in 1922 eleven families were assisted. The budget of the Fund in 1922 was £2,586.

The aim of the Ex-Service Men's Association was to give material and moral help to Ex-Service men of the former Russian Army and Navy. The principle upon which the work was carried out was to give loans to its members to enable them to start work and

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83 ibid.
84 FO 371/8217, File 6462, Paper N 6462. Work of the BCRRC, draft of the report 4.7.1922. PRO.
85 FO 371/9347, File 91, Paper N 1700. Report of activities of Russian Red Cross Society in G.B, Russian Relief Fund and Russian Ex-Service Men's Mutual Provident Association for the year 1922.

generally to find employment for its members. During 1922 permanent employment was found for three members and temporary work for sixteen. The budget of the Association was quite small, in 1922, for example, £429.[86]

In 1923 the Appeal for the Russian Clergy and Church Aid Fund was established in Britain. The President of the Fund was Rt. Rev. Dr. Russell Wakefield; Chairman of the Committee, the Rev. G. Napier; Honorary Secretary, W. Tudor Pole and Vice-Presidents the Bishops of London, Wales, Edinburgh, Dublin, St. Albans, Truro, Winchester. Bernard Pares acted as the Honorary Treasurer. In October 1925 Pares replaced Tudor Pole as the Honorary Secretary [87].

A large proportion of the funds of the Appeal Fund was used for bringing relief to imprisoned and exiled clergy in Russia and abroad. The Fund also supported the Russian Student Christian Movement, which had been established in various refugee communities throughout Europe, as well as the Russian Theological Academy in Paris, which had been opened in 1925. [88] The Russian Student Christian Movement had its branch in London, headed by V. Korenchevskii, the Chairman of the Russian Academic Group. The headquarters of the movement were in Paris, but it was stated that the movement was especially attracted by the Anglican Church life, and a number of its members had participated at conferences organised by the British Student Christian Movement.[89]

There were also several 'political' Russian organisations established from 1918 onwards, which mainly aimed at the restoration of the anti-Bolshevik regime in Russia. Most of them, as well as their publications have already been mentioned in earlier chapters. Among the most influential of these organisations was undoubtedly the Russian Liberation Committee. It was established in February 1919 on the initiative of M. I. Rostovtsev, P.N. Miliukov and A.V. Tyrkova-Williams. Other members of the Committee were V.D. Nabokov, A.V. Rumanov, H.W. Williams, D.D. Gardner, S.V.

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86 ibid.
87 Douglas Papers, Vol. 45, ff. 50-55. Lambeth Palace Library.
88 Papers of Archbishop R.T. Davidson, Vol. 477, ff. 122-23. Lambeth Palace library; Raeff 1990, p. 127.
89 Headlam Papers, MS. 2626, ff. 356-60; Douglas Papers, Vol. 45, ff. 348-49. Lambeth Palace Library.

Denisova, V. I. Isaev, I. V. Shklovskii-Diones, P.B. Struve, J. Krukston and A. Borman. The task of the Committee was stated to be 'the liberation of Russia and the upheaval of its prestige'. The Committee was located at 173 Fleet Street, then at the centre of British journalism.[90] Meetings of the Committee were held once a week in order to discuss important questions related to Russia and to decide about the actions of the Committee. In the meetings it was, for example, decided to print short slogans as propaganda, such as 'Russia United and Free' and 'No Bolshevism' at the publications of the Committee; to circulate the 'White book' on Bolshevism and to arrange meetings with prominent English persons.[91]

During its first year the Committee issued a monthly *Bulletin*, devoted to Russian affairs. In February 1920, because of the change in the Allied attitude towards Russian White armies, due to their recent retreat, the Committee started to issue a weekly journal called *The New Russia.* In August 1921 the review changed its name to *The Russian Life*, now published once a month, which continued until March 1922.[92] In addition the Committee also published separate pamphlets, among which were for example 'Why Soviet Russia is starving' by A.V. Tyrkova and 'Russia and England' by P.N. Miliukov. The pamphlets, as the other publications of the Committee, took a strong stand for the struggle against anti-Bolshevik Russia and for the continuance of the Allied support of the White forces. They, for example, strongly condemned the change in the British attitude and policy at the beginning of 1920 as a consequence of the retreat of Kolchak and Denikin, and later the lifting of the blockade of Bolshevik Russia and the peace negotiations with the Bolsheviks.[93]

The Russian National Union was established by Russian émigrés in 1919 in order to unite the anti-Bolshevik forces in their struggle against Bolshevism. The headquarters of the Union were in Paris. In London a branch Committee of the Union existed under the title of the Russian National Committee. [94] The first General Meeting of the Russian

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90 H.W. Williams Papers, Add. 54466, Vol. XXX1, f. 18. British library, department of manuscripts; Kaznina 1997, p. 36.
91 H.W. Williams Papers, Add. 54466, Vol. XXXI, f. 24, ff. 28-29, f. 30. British library, department of manuscripts.
92 Russian Liberation Union (Committee), Bulletins, 1-52, February 1919-February 1920; The New Russia, Vol. 1, No. 1, 5 February- Vol. 3, No. 46; The Russian Life, Nos. 1-6, August 1921-February-March 1922.
93 The New Russia, Vol. 1, No. 1, 5 February 1920 and Vol. 1, No. 4, 26 February 1920.
94 H.W. Williams Papers, Add. 54466, Vol. XXXI, f. 183. British library, department of manuscripts.

National Committee in London was held on 12 April 1919. The resolutions of the meeting stated that it was a duty of all Russians to 'rally round their solid, reunited, mighty and sovereign Russia' and that it was essential to uphold the spiritual authority of the Orthodox Church as well as to reconstruct the Russian army. It was concluded that the Committee 'firmly believed in a final triumph of justice and truth in Russia'. Later in July it was stated that the National Committee in London was formed by Russians residing in London, who, in normal times would have belonged to different political parties, but at that present juncture were united in a common bond to establish a united and powerful Russia.[95]

Another anti-Bolshevik émigré organisation was the Union 'Russian Commonwealth' (Narodopravstvo), established in London at the end of 1918. 'Russian Commonwealth' was stated to be the watchword of the Union, meaning a self-governing, free and independent Russia. As its objects the Union had the uniting of Russians who repudiated the Bolshevik rule, advocating a democratically elected Constituent Assembly. It considered the republican order to be the best guarantee of the peaceful development of Russia and believed in close co-operation with the Allied governments. It was further stated that the Union advocated a commonwealth and not autocracy in any form, even a constitutional monarchy, and that the enemies of the Union were Bolshevism, Tsarism and Prussianism.

The Chairman of the Union was Professor S.P Tiurin and as a Vice-Chairman acted I.V Shklovskii-Dioneo. In addition to them the Committee of the Union consisted of five other members. The Union was divided into different sections, known as the Literary Section, Section of Economic Problems and Information Bureau. The offices of the Union were located at Sardinia House, Kingsway. [96] The Union also published a twice-monthly magazine called *The Russian Commonwealth* where they argued the anti-Bolshevik cause, lobbied for the representation of anti-Bolshevik groups at the Peace Conference and opposed the Prinkipo proposal, a joint meeting between the Bolshevik and anti-Bolshevik forces for purpose of peace discussions. The review continued until

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95 The Russian Outlook, No. 2, vol. 1, 17 May 1919 and No. 10, Vol. 1, 12 July 1919.
96 The Russian Commonwealth, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1 November 1918 and No. 2, 15 November 1918; Kaznina 1997, p. 33.

January 1920, after issuing 12 numbers. The main reasons for its discontinuation was the departure of the editor S. Poliakov-Litovtsev to Paris, since he had played a crucial role in the magazine. [97]

In addition to these there were a few other independent Russian or Anglo-Russian periodical publications in Britain in the early 1920s. One of these was the weekly magazine *The Russian/Russkii zhurnal*, published in both English and Russian from October 1918 to August 1919. It was founded and edited by Edouard S. Liubov and the editorial offices were at Southampton Street, Holborn.

It was stated that the journal was devoted to Russian affairs, the struggle against the Bolsheviks, support for existing Russian organisations and their activities in London and to provide information relating to Russian affairs in general. During 1919 the editorial took a clear stand against the proposal to invite Bolshevik and anti-Bolshevik forces to Prinkipo by stating that the invitation 'not only repudiates the policy of ostracism but constitutes in reality a recognition of Lenin-Trotskii government'. In August 1919 the journal also pleaded against the British decision to withdraw its troops from Northern Russia.[98]

Another Russian paper appeared briefly in early 1922, *Russkii Put'*, edited by N.V. Sipiagin. Issued only three times, the editorial of the first issue in March 1922 stated that the task of the journal, as of all émigré journals, was the liberation of Russia, as, according to the editorial, Bolshevik Russia was not Russia. There existed another Russia 'under' the Soviet one, and that should be the main target of care for all. In its second issue the paper reminded the Russia émigrés of the work they should do for the restoration and renewal of Russia.[99]

One more weekly journal deserves a mention. This is *The Russian Outlook*, published from May 1918 to September 1920 and edited by Stafford Talbot. The paper published articles of both British specialists in Russian affairs and prominent Russian émigrés.

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97 The Russian Commonwealth, Vol. 2, No. 13, November 1919.
98 The Russian/Russkii zhurnal, Vol. 1, No. 1, 15 October 1919- No. 43, 7 August 1919.
99 Russkii Put', No. 1, 11 March 1922 and No. 2, 8 April 1922.

The Russian Outlook reported regularly about the situation in Russia, and the paper strongly supported the anti-Bolshevik cause. In its first issue it was pointed out that according to the Foreign Office White Paper fewer than 5% of the Russian population was sympathetic to the Bolshevik regime. It also published the views of a number of prominent Russians, such as Miliukov, Tiurin, Chaikovskii, Poliakov-Litovtsev, Hessen and Dessino. [100] In later issues the journal continued to stress the importance of the Allied support to the White forces and later condemned the change in their policy, especially that of the British government. It also introduced and presented the activities of different Russian organisations and the émigré colony in general.[101]

6.3. Life of Russian Émigrés in Britain in the 1920s

The remainder of this chapter will concentrate on the life of the Russian émigré community in Britain, primarily during the first decade of exile. Geographically the émigrés lived mainly in London, or other towns nearby, for example Oxford. Although there were Russian émigrés in many other places outside London, the only proper 'émigré colony' existed only in London.

The smallness of the Russian émigré community in Britain without doubt affected various sides of life of the émigrés. If considering, for example, the question of assimilation of the émigrés into British society, the smallness of the colony could affect it in two different ways. It could mean that the social relationships of the émigrés were more easily concentrated inside the Russian community, since the émigrés knew each other better in a smaller community. The fact that the British authorities had carefully obeyed the rules for entry and used very selective measures in determining who could be admitted also influenced the composition of the community in an 'homogenising' manner.

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100 The Russian Outlook, No. 1, Vol. 1, 10 May 1919.
101 The Russian Outlook, No. 1, Vol. 1, 10 May 1919- No. 72, Vol. 2, 18 September 1920.

Thus, the strict policies in admission meant that the majority of those admitted had either enough money to support themselves and/or had influential British connections. At very least they had to have some influential sponsors or friends in Britain who would support their case and promise to look after them financially. Although many émigrés faced great material and financial difficulties, especially in the beginning, the overall material situation of the émigré community was, nevertheless, better than that of Russians, for example, in France or Yugoslavia. [102].

However, the smallness of the émigré colony could also facilitate the early intermixing of the émigrés with the British. It is evident that during the whole 1920s Russian émigrés in Britain socialised to a large extend with each other and the émigré community was an important 'source of support', both social and material. However, it does not seem that the existence of the close and small émigré community excluded relations with British society. Quite the opposite, according to émigré accounts, they socialised and intermixed with the British from the very beginning and were quickly absorbed into British society.

The fact that even the first generation émigrés, particularly those who arrived to Britain in the early 1920s as children with their parents, almost without exception married British subjects also speaks of their easy and quick assimilation. With the second generation of Russian émigrés this was of course even more so, so much that marriage between two second generation Russians in Britain was very unlikely. Thus, unlike in France, where the Russian émigré community remained 'unmixed' for much longer and even the second generation of émigrés often married each other, in Britain this was not the case. [103]

The smallness of the Russian émigré community undoubtedly eased assimilation, but it might also have something to do with the reception of the émigrés by the host society. It seems that despite the negative attitude of the British authorities, as well as at least to

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102 P. Shilovsky in Glenny and Stone 1990, p. 293.

103 Interviews of Mrs. Barbara Whittal, 21 January 1997, Mr. Kirill Fitzlyon, 29 November 1996, Mrs. Sophie Goodman, 28 January 1997, Professor Elisabeth Kutaissova, 21 February, 1997, Princess Sophia Wacznadze, 4 June 1997 and Professor Dimitry Obolensky, 21 April 1998.

some extent of the British public towards the admission of Russian refugees to Britain, after their arrival émigrés were treated with hospitality, more so than in some other countries of emigration. [104] According to Kirill Fitzlyon, the first generation Russian émigré in Britain, the British treated Russian émigrés 'extremely well', and Britain was 'wonderful nation to come into and live in'.[105]

The émigré accounts in some other countries of Russian emigration were not quite as positive. In Czechoslovakia the left-wing circles, influential among workers and intellectuals were in fact quite hostile towards Russian émigrés.[106] Also in France, at least in view of some émigré accounts, the Russian émigrés were not received well. According to Tatiana Gabard, a Russian émigré in Paris, Russian émigrés were only invited to France because they were needed, and the 'attitude of the common people was awful'.[107] There were similar experiences in Germany. For example, in the opinion of Michael Gordey, Russian émigré in Berlin, it was very difficult to have a close relationship with German people. This, on its part, meant further isolation of the émigrés from the German society.[108] In words of Nina Berberova: 'The German Berlin was only a background for these years, sickly Germany, sickly money, the sickly trees of Tiergarten'.[109]

Following on from earlier, it seems that, unlike for example in France or Germany, Russian émigrés in Britain were not so afraid of denationalisation, in other words assimilation. If this had been the case, they would not have, for example intermarried so quickly and frequently and the relationship with the British would have been more restrained. This does not equal to the suggestion that Russian émigrés in Britain lost their Russian identity. Definitely, at least the first generation of Russian émigrés in Britain remained very 'Russian' throughout their lives in exile. The words of a Russian émigré Mark Wolff: 'the influence of England on us became very important, but my

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104 Inteviews of Mr. Kirill Fitzlyon, 29 November 1996, Mrs. Barbara Whittal, 21 January 1997; Interview of Mrs. Sophia Bocharska. In Michael Glenny collection, GLE/1/1/5. SSEES.
105 Interview of Kirill Fitzlyon, 29 November 1996.
106 Chinyaeva 1994, p. 294.
107 Tatiana Gabard in Glenny and Stone 1990, p. 284.
108 Interview of Michael Gordey. In Michael Glenny collection, GLE/1/1/5. SSEES; Williams 1972, pp. 322-323.
109 Berberova, Nina. The Italics Are Mine. London 1969, p. 165.

house remained a Russian house and I have never tried to pretend that I am British' [110] seem to describe well the feelings of the first generation of émigrés.

The fact that the Russian émigrés in exile in general struggled to maintain their Russian identity and resist assimilation was due to fact that they considered themselves as representatives of 'true' Russia, as opposed to the 'false' one represented by the Bolsheviks. Therefore, in exile they maintained the structure of the 'old Russia' as well they could and made efforts to preserve and carry on the traditional and genuine Russian culture, which could be utilised after their return back to Russia. In this work the Russian language and its continuous use in exile played an important role. Language not only defined the tradition of Russian culture, as reflected in its literature, but it was also essential ingredient of the identity of Russian émigrés. It was particularly the Russian language, both written and oral, that tied the émigrés to their past and helped them to surpass their dispersion. [111]

Thus, Russian émigrés in exile clearly continued to consider themselves as part of Russian nation, which temporarily had to stay outside the borders of its national territory. According to Benedict Anderson nation is an imagined political community. He continues that 'it is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them of hear them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their community'.[112] Anthony Smith also significantly points out that the 'ethnie[113] do not cease to be ethnie when they are dispersed and have lost their homeland; for ethnicity is a matter of myths, memories, values and symbols...'[114]. These myths, values, memories, symbols and other cultural components are the fundamental features of national identity. [115] Preserving these features therefore became a fundamental task for Russian émigrés in their efforts to maintain a Russian identity and unity with the Russian nation.

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110 Memoirs of Mark Wolff, p. 236. On microfische, at the deposition of his daughter, Ms. Tatiana Wolff.
111 Raeff 1990, pp. 4-5, 10, 16, 47, 109.
112 Anderson, Benedict. Imagined Communities. Reflections of the Origin and Spread of Nationalism. London and New York 1991, p. 6.
113 'Ethnie' meaning 'ethnic community'.
114 Smith, Anthony D. The Ethnic Origins of Nations. Oxford (UK) and Cambridge (USA) 1988, p. 28.
115 Smith, Antrhony D. National Identity. London 1991, p. 14.

These feelings undoubtedly were to a great extent shared at least by the first generation of Russian émigrés in Britain. However, it nevertheless seems that for Russian émigrés in Britain this 'Russianness' did not become quite as 'exclusive' feature, as largely happened for example in France, where the existence of the large émigré community 'fed' the feelings of exclusiveness and isolation.

On the part of the children of the Russian émigrés the English boarding and private schools naturally played important role in assimilating Russian émigré children into British society. As pointed out, for example, by Mrs. Whittal, the first generation Russian émigré in Britain, at the time she finished the boarding school, she was already 'anglicised' [116]. In fact, the English public education had become quite popular in Russia already before the Revolution, especially in educated spheres, which meant that many Russian émigrés very much wanted their children to be educated in British public schools.[117]

It has already been mentioned that some British educational institutions agreed to admit Russian émigré children free of charge or with considerable reductions in fees. Different organisations, such as the Educational Sub-Committee of the Central Russian Committee and various Russian organisations, particularly the Russo-British Bratstvo, the Russian Academic Group and Russian Relief Fund also carried out important work for the educational needs of Russian émigrés.

Many British individuals also showed a great interest in the issue, and assisted Russian families in finding proper schools for their children, as well as helping with school fees. References have already been made to Sir Bernard Pares, whose personal work for Russian émigrés, especially in the educational field, was of great importance. Another person who greatly assisted in providing proper education for Russian children was Mr. Spalding in Oxford. Through him several Russian émigré children were assisted in their education at universities. [118]

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116 Interview of Mrs. Barbara Whittal, 21 January 1997.
117 Interview of Mrs. Barbara Whittal, 21 January 1997; Ignatieff 1998, p. 31.
118 Interviews of Mrs. Barbara Whittal , 21 January 1997, Mrs. Sophie Goodman, 28 January 1997 and Professor Dimitry Obolensky, 21 April 1998; Lady Masha Williams (sister of Mrs. Whittal) in Glenny and Stone 1990, p. 309.

Mr. Fynes-Clinton, an Anglican clergyman who worked actively at the Russian Clergy and Church Aid Fund, also showed a lot of interest in the education of Russian émigré children and Britain, and arranged for Anglican convents to educate some Russian children free of charge.[119] Similarly Mr. Riley, who was a well-known promoter of Anglo-Russian friendship, used all his efforts to get Russian children into British schools free of charge. For example in 1923 over twenty Russian émigré children were placed in British schools free of charge. [120] The Russian Red Cross assisted Russian families in paying the school fees of their children, though from the beginning their resources were very limited due to the financial difficulties of the organisation. [121]

The issue of language is also of great importance. Even if the first generation Russians continued to speak Russian among themselves and Russian was the language spoken at home with the children, the fact that the children went to English schools, socialised with the English children and learned the language, definitely worked towards the quick anglicising of the younger generation. The situation was somewhat different for example in France, not only because of the fact the Russian émigré community was much more closed, but also because of the existence of Russian émigré schools, which allowed Russian children to study in their own language. The same was true with some other places of emigration, for example in Czechoslovakia (Prague) and Yugoslavia (Belgrade). [122]

In Britain there were no such Russian educational establishments, primarily due to the small number of émigrés in Britain. In a paper by Nicholas Hans, a Russian émigré and future pioneer in the field of comparative education [123], given at the conference of the Pedagogical Bureau, it was stated that there was not a single Russian School in Britain.

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119 Interview of Mrs. Barbara Whittal, 21 January 1997; Lady Masha Williams in Glenny and Stone 1990, p. 308; Memoirs of Alexandra Pushchina (mother of Mrs. Whittal and Lady Williams) 1966, p. 96. In Michael Glenny collection, GLE/1/1/2. SSEES.

120 Report of the activities of the Russian Red Cross Society in Great Britain and other Russian charity organisations in London for the year 1923. Archives of the Russian Refugees Aid Society. Nicholas House, Bedford Park, London.

121 FO 371/9347, File 91, Paper N 1700. Report of the activities of Russian Red Cross Society... for the year 1922. PRO.

122 Rossiiskaia Emigratsiia v Turtsii, Iugo-Vostochnoi I Tsentral'noi Evrope 20-h Godov. Moskva 1994, p. 89; Raeff 1990, pp. 56-66.

123 Nicholas Hans collection, NH 4/1/2 and Introduction. The Institute of Education Archives.

Instead Russian children studied at British schools either at their own expense, or with grants from various charities.[124]

Despite the fact that there were no Russian schools in Britain the émigrés had their representative in the Russian Pedagogical Bureau in Prague. The Pedagogical bureau had been established in 1923, to serve as a centre of research and documentation for various educational questions.[125] The representative of Russian émigrés in Britain was Nicholas Hans, more specifically representing Russian teachers in London.[126] In Russia Hans worked as a Director of Education in Odessa until 1920 when he emigrated to Britain. In Britain he first taught Russian, then worked as a secretary of the Russian Academic Group in London and finished his Ph.D. at the School of Slavonic Studies at King's College on Russian Educational Policy. Dr. Bernard Pares acted as a tutor for his Ph.D. and later recommended Hans for various university posts. [127]

There were also some attempts to arrange peripatetic courses in Russian studies during the school holidays in the 1920s. This project was taken up by the Russian Academic group in 1922. [128] In summer 1923, a special Children's Colony was organised by the Academic group, attended by about fifty émigré children, who were instructed in Russian language, history and geography by Russian teachers and a priest.[129] Apart from this there is not much information about the continuation and the success of these courses. According to P. Kovalevskii, the émigré historian, these courses were soon discontinued.[130] However, some summer courses for children were still going in the late 1920s. For example in 1928 a house was rented at Ewell and a number of Russian children spent four weeks studying Russian language, history, geography and the Orthodox religion. [131]

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124 Biulleten' Pedagogicheskogo Biuro po delam srednii I nizshei russkoi shkoly za granitsei, No. 2, p. 46. Prague 1923.
125 Raeff 1990, p. 55.
126 Biulleten' Pedagigicheskogo Biuro, No. 1, p. 5. Prague 1923.
127 Nicholas Hans collection, NH 5/2/1, 5/2/3, 5/2/13. The Institute of Education Archives. University of London.
128 FO 371/9437, File 91, Paper N 1700. Report on activities of Russian Red Cross Society in Great Britain... for the year 1922. PRO.
129 Report of the activities of the Russian Red Cross Society in Great Britain and other Russian charity organisations in London for the year 1923. The archives of Russian Refugees Aid Society.
130 Kovalevskii P. E. Zarubezhnaia Rossiia. Istoriia I kul'turno-prosvetitel'naia rabota russkogo zarubezh'ia za polveka (1920-1970). Paris 1971, p. 57.
131 Report of the Russian Red Cross Society for the year 1928. The archives of Russian Refugees Aid Society.

That there were these kind of attempts to educate the émigré children in Russian language and culture indicates that the Russian émigrés in Britain were worried about their children growing up without knowledge of Russian history and culture. The common feature of the Russian emigration was their desire to preserve the children's knowledge of Russian culture, so that in a future free and non-Bolshevik Russia, to which the majority of the émigrés continued to believe in, they would have skills to play a constructive role. [132]

Although the émigré community in Britain was more homogeneous in its composition than in some other countries of emigration, all the groups of 'the old Russia' could be found in the émigré community in London, beginning with the Court represented by the Grand Duchess Ksenia. [133] This also meant that even if refugee status in a sense reduced everyone to the same level, the émigrés, nevertheless, continued to follow the same protocols and etiquette as they had in Russia. The hierarchy of titles was also very much kept up. For example, the Grand Duchess Ksenia was always addressed as the Grand Duchess by all the émigrés in London, and the former titles like Count, Countess or Prince, Princess, were also continued to be used. It can therefore be stated that the Russian émigrés in Britain at least at the beginning of the emigration largely 'kept to their particular class'. [134]

There also seemed to have been some resentfulness from the side of the supporters of the 'old rule', the monarchists, towards those émigrés who had supported the February Revolution and Kerenskii. As stated by Vladimir Nabokov, among certain Russian émigrés 'patriotism and politics boiled down to a snarling resentment of which was directed more against Kerenskii than against Lenin'.[135] Also, for example Baron Meyendorff and David Soskice, both of whom supported Kerenskii, were not 'looked at well' by certain monarchists and were even considered to be 'Red'. David Soskice had gone to Russia in the summer of 1917 as a correspondent of the Manchester Guardian and had become a private secretary of Kerenskii, before escaping to Britain in

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132 Raeff 1990, p. 48.
133 P.Shilovsky in Glenny and Stone 1990, pp. 291-92.
134 Interview of Mr. Kirill Fizlyon, 29 November 1996; P. Shilovsky in Glenny and Stone 1990, pp. 291-292 and Lady Masha Williams in Glenny and Stone 1990, p. 308.
135 Nabokov 1969, p. 201.

November 1917. Before this he had lived in Britain and worked actively in the Society of Friends of Russian Freedom, opposing the oppressive Tsarist policies. This, of course, made him a quite unacceptable person in the eyes of the monarchists. With time, however, opinions became at least somewhat more conciliatory. [136]

Generally speaking the Russian émigré community in London was actually less politically oriented than in many other countries. Many political parties that succeeded and flourished in some other countries of emigration did not do so in Britain. In the late 1920s, for example, a branch of the party called 'Mladorossy', the Young Russians, which spoke of a 'monarchy with soviets', was established in London. According to Ivan Bibilin, who was a member of 'Mladorossi' group in London, it became somewhat popular, lasted for a while but then faded out. [137]

There were of course members of various Russian parties and political groupings among the Russian émigrés in Britain, for example V. D. Nabokov and P.N. Miliukov, both members of the Kadet Party. However, in general the role of politics among Russian émigrés in Britain clearly seems to have been less important than in many other countries. Perhaps the fact that many of those who were politically active, such as Miliukov and Nabokov, soon emigrated to other countries also speaks for this.

On the whole, it seems that the Russian émigré community in Britain was quite united, and the émigrés supported each other and socialised with each other frequently. Very few émigrés seem to have isolated themselves from émigré society, although there are few examples of this kind of behaviour. According to for example P. Shilovskii, who had been involved at the monorail project in Russia and was well-known specialist in gyroscopic research, his family held aloof from the Russian colony for a long time. He and his wife arrived in England in 1922.

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136 The Stow Hill (Soskice) papers, DS.2/1, Box 6. Interview with D. Soskice in London and DS.6/5, Box 24. Article by Hollingsworth on Soskice in European Studies Review, 6 (1976); Interview of Sophie Goodman, 28 January 1997; Lady Masha Williams in Glenny and Stone 1990, p. 306.

137 Interview of Ivan Ivanich Bibilin. In Michael Glenny collection, GLE/1/1/6. SSEES; Raeff 1990, p. 9.

According to him, this isolation from the émigré community was due to 'instinctive reactions of fear' which they as 'representatives of old Russia' felt even in England, beyond the reach of the Soviet system. This feeling of fear might have been influenced by the fact that they had lived in Soviet Russia for a few years before they emigrated to Britain. Shilovskii was granted a visa to England by the Soviet authorities in order to study new technologies, but was asked to sign an assurance that 'they will behave correctly in relation to Soviet government while abroad'. Also, visas were only granted to him and his wife, and their children were kept as 'hostages', so that the parents would return to Russia. Shilovskiis, however, managed to get the children out of Russia and to England. Petr Shilovskii's two brothers, nevertheless, continued to live in Soviet Russia, and he had to consider also their well-being. According to the testimony of Shilovskii, after a few years also they became recognised and close members of the émigré community in London. [138]

There were many uniting social structures for the émigrés, such as the Red Cross and other charitable organisations, the annual Bazaar, the Balls and other social occasions, dinners, and most importantly the Orthodox Church. In various financial and other difficulties, the support of the existing charitable organisation and fellow Russian émigrés proved most important. Many British individuals also provided assistance for the émigrés, although, as seen earlier with the appeal of George Buchanan's Committee, the 'large public' was not always very responsive to the appeals for the assistance of Russian refugees. However, for example, the Shilovskii family was helped by several English friends financially. A good friend of theirs, for instance, offered a large sum of money to live on until their affairs would improve. They were also assisted by other scientists familiar to P. Shilovskii, as well as by a good friend of his wife. [139] Moreover, in cases when a British person had supported the application of a certain Russian émigré or émigré family and promised they would look after them financially, he or she was actually 'obliged' to support them in the case of financial difficulties.

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138 P. Shilovsky in Glenny and Stone 1990, pp. 290-91; Selected extracts from the memoirs of P.P. Shilovsky, vol. 3 In Michael Glenny collection, GLE/1/1/4. SSEES.

139 Selected extracts from the memoirs of P.P. Shilovsky, vol. 3. In Michael Glenny collection, GLE/1/1/4; Shilovsky in Glenny and Stone 1990, p. 63, 289.

The more well-to-do Russian émigrés also offered their help when they could. So, for example Baron Meyendorff financially assisted many of his émigré friends, living in various countries around Europe [140]. As pointed out by P. Shilovskii's daughter, Olga Lawrence, there was no social security, but 'in an emergency friends would rally round and help'.[141]

To some extent, the small number of émigrés in Britain, at least in a long run, made finding employment easier than in the countries of mass emigration. As noted earlier, unlike in France, for example, in Britain there were no restrictions, at least in principle, foreigners taking employment in the liberal professions, such as doctors, barristers, etc. To work at the English Bar, for example, foreigners were required to take exams in law. Once they passed the exams, they, however, were able to practice law. In this way some Russian advocates managed to start practising law, and were able to help many of the compatriots with legal issues; on many occasions free of charge. [142] Many émigrés also managed to use their knowledge of different languages; French, German, Russian and English, and to achieve various jobs through that, for example in banking and other businesses, or by doing translation work and giving lessons in Russian language. [143]

Many émigrés started their life in exile in Britain living in hotels, as did the majority of Russian émigrés in other countries of emigration. Some of them continued to live in hotels for some time, but the majority of émigrés soon rented a flat or house, or bought one, depending on the financial situation they were in. There was not a 'White Russian' district in London similar to that existing in the East End of London in the case of the earlier Jewish Russian refugees, although it seems that quite a few Russian émigrés first concentrated in West Kensington and areas around it. [144]

Socially the most important gathering was probably the annual Bazaar of the Russian Red Cross, attended by all Russian émigrés but also their English friends. The Bazaars

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140 Meyendorff collection, Box 20. Finnish National Archives in Helsinki.
141 Interview of Olga Lawrence. In Michael Glenny collection, GLE/1/1/5. SSEES.
142 Memoirs of Mark Wolff, pp. 271-272, 288-89.
143 Interviews of Mr. Kirill Fitzlyon, 29 November 1996, Mrs. Barbara Whittal, 21 January 1997 and Sophie Goodman, 21 January 1997.
144 Interview of Mrs. Barbara Whittal, 21 January 1997; Interview of Ivan Ivanich Bibilin. In Michael Glenny collection, GLE/1/1/6; Memoirs of Marc Wolff, pp. 235-247.

were started in the early 1920s to collect funds for the Russian Red Cross, and they soon became the highlight of the year for the whole émigré community. This was probably largely due to the fact that the Bazaar was not a political occasion, and people could go there and meet each other in a relaxed atmosphere. In the latter part of the 1920s, the Russian Orthodox Church, for example, had gone through a division. The Bazaar, on the other hand, remained free of all political considerations. [145]

There were a number of other social occasions arranged by the émigré community. Different Balls were arranged several times a year, as were also concerts, ballets and theatre performances. The famous Diaghilev Ballet, for instance, held its performances in London, and Madame Leonidova, who had founded her own ballet company after she had emigrated to Italy, helped to set up a theatrical company conceived by Russian émigrés. She also gave ballet lessons for émigrés who joined the company, held in Russian Embassy at Chesham House with the permission of Sablin. Different concerts and performances were also held at the Russian Embassy, and later in the 'Russian House' of Evgenii Sablin. His house became the centre of the émigré life, especially after the Embassy buildings had to be released for the use of the representatives of the Soviet government. [146] This happened in 1924, after the recognition of the Soviet government by the British Labour government. After this Sablin brought a large Victorian house in Kensington, which came to be known as the 'Russian House' in London. [147]

The Russian House also acted as a meeting place for the visitors from abroad; writers, artists and intellectuals from other centres of emigration, especially from Paris. All this was facilitated by the fact that Sablin did not consider the Russian House as his personal possession; he himself used only four rooms of the house, and rest of it was given over for the use of Russian organisations and society in general. Sablin himself continued to play an important role in social, cultural and political life of the Russian émigré society

145 Interview of Mrs. Barbara Whittal, 21 January 1997; P. Shilovsky in Glenny and Stone 1990, p. 296.
146 Memoirs of Dimitry Rostov. In Michael Glenny collection, GLE/1/1/2; FO 371/9347, File 91, Paper N 1700. Report of the activities of the Russian Red Cross Society ... for the year 1922. PRO; Bariatinsky, Princess Anatole Marie. My Russian Life. London 1923, p. 339.
147 Kaznina 1997, p. 24.

and act as their representative in different matters, especially to the British authorities, as well as to the League of Nations and High Commissioner of Russian refugees. [148]

Another key person at the centre of the émigré community and its activities was Princess Ekaterina Golitsyn, who worked actively for the Russian Red Cross and especially their annual Bazaars. She and her husband managed to set up a successful small antiques business in London, and her commercial and social activity made her an important and visible person in both Russian and British circles. [149] According to memoirs of Aleksandra Puschina, Golitsyns' house in Chesssington, Surrey, was 'one of the most hospitable and friendly Russian homes in London'.[150]

A special role in the cultural and social life of the Russian émigré society was the 'Days of Russian Culture', celebrated on 8 June, Pushkin's birthday. This was by no means an event exclusively of Russian émigrés in Britain, but was celebrated in various countries of Russian emigration. Among the initiators of this celebration were the Russian Pedagogical Bureau in Prague, the Zemgor, the Board of the Union of the Russian Academic Organisations Abroad, the Association of Russian Teachers' Organisations Abroad and the Association of Russian Student Organisations Abroad.

In March 1925 these organisations had a general meeting on the issue and as a consequence of this meeting they issued an united appeal to Russian people abroad, to local Russian associations, societies and groups to organise yearly a 'Day of Russian Culture' as a desirable means of uniting all Russians.[151] This appeal was soon taken up by all the centres of the Russian diaspora, and the 'Days of Russian culture' became an effective way of encouraging especially the younger generation to become actively involved in Russian cultural life. With the celebration of these days, Pushkin became a symbol of Russian cultural tradition for émigrés, as well as means to express their

148 Kaznina 1997, pp. 24-26; Kudriakova 1995, p. 47.
149 P. Shilovsky in Glenny and Stone 1990, p. 296 and Lady Masha Williams in ibidem, p. 307.
150 Memoirs of Alexandra Puschina, GLE/1/1/2. SSEES.
151 Raeff 1990, pp. 93, 211-12;

national consciousness independently of political or even religious views. Similarly, he was a symbol of their links with the past, links with Russian culture and country. [152]

During celebratory days Russian émigrés in different countries of emigration read works of Pushkin, as well as enacted various theatrical and musical performances. Scholars lectured in Russian clubs, churches and schools, to address primarily the young generation and to acquaint them with the literary, artistic and historic tradition of Russia. In Britain the Day of Russian Culture started to be celebrated in 1926, after which it became an annual tradition, in which the whole Russian émigré community took part. [153] In London a literary circle called the Pushkin Club (or circle) was also established, with a reading room and small library with Russian books.[154] The Northern Society, established by Russians evacuated from North Russia, also arranged theatrical performances, dance parties and literary gatherings with the aim of keeping the younger generation familiar with Russian culture. [155]

The more frequent social occasions were dinners, which were held regularly and which gathered many members of the émigré community together. They were held in turns by émigré families and most of the people who attended were other Russian émigrés, although their English friends were also often invited. In these gatherings there would be Russian food, at least Russian bread and salted cucumbers and herrings, that were sold at the two existing Russian grocers in Fulham. These dinners served as important uniting bond for Russian émigrés. [156]

Finally, the meaning of the Orthodox Church and the orthodox religion to Russian émigrés can not be emphasised too much. It served as a spiritual centre; as an uniting organ between Russian émigrés, their Russian identity and religion, but also as a general meeting place for émigrés. Clearly the role of the Church became important for the émigrés as a bond to the past, as an incarnation of the Russian religion and Russianness,

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152 Raeff, Marc. 'The First Russian Emigration', p. 11. Article in 'Obozrenie' November 1985, translated by Michael Glenny. In Michael Glenny collection, GLE/1/1/8. SSEES.
153 Kudriakova 1995, p. 50; Raeff 1990, p. 93.
154 Raeff 1990, p. 68.
155 P. Shilovsky in Glenny and Stone 1990, p. 294.
156 Interview of Mrs. Sophie Goodman, 28 January 1997.

especially important in the difficult situation where the émigrés found themselves, as stateless exiles in a foreign country. [157]

The Orthodox Church enjoyed an important position in the life of not only individual Russian émigrés, but also the Russian émigré community on the whole. According to Lady Masha Williams, Russian émigré in London, the Church was the main thing in the lives of Russian émigrés and the whole of life centred around the Church. On Sundays everyone met in the church, and after church the émigrés gathered to someone's house for tea. [158] As pointed out by P. Shilovskii, attending more or less regularly to the service was a sign that one belonged to the émigré community. Non-attendance at the Orthodox Church would have meant that one was inclined towards Soviet orientation or that one was no longer concerned with the interests and honour of the Russian emigration.[159]

Thus, the Church clearly was of the major importance to Russian émigrés also in Britain, where the relationship to the British society was quite relaxed and unproblematic. On the other side, the fact that the British authorities seem to have adopted a positive attitude towards the Orthodox Church and showed respect for it naturally helped to keep the relationship between them and émigrés unstrained and easy.[160] Again, in this kind of situation the Orthodox Church became more a positive way of expressing and preserving the Russian identity, instead of becoming a way to make a distinction between the host society and émigré society in a 'negative way'.

During the 1920s the Anglican and Russian Orthodox Churches actually became quite closely connected. It has been already mentioned earlier that help was provided by the Anglican leaders to the Russian Clergy and that the Russian Student Christian Movement was especially attracted to the Anglican Church life. In January 1927 the leaders of the Anglican Church organised the first conference between the Russian Student Christian Movement and interested English student groups in St. Albans. This

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157 Interviews of Kyril Fitzlyon, 29 November 1996, Mrs. Barbara Whittal, 21 January 1997, Mrs Sophie Goodman, 28 January 1997 and Professor Elisabeth Kutaissova, 21 February 1997.
158 Lady Masha Williams in Glenny and Stone 1990, pp. 306-07.
159 P. Shilovsky in Glenny and Stone 1990, p. 295.
160 P. Shilovsky in Glenny and Stone 1990, p. 294.

was a small gathering with some twelve Russians and twenty English. Among the Russian leaders present were, for example, Nikolai Zernov, leader of the Russian Student Christian Movement and Sergei Bulgakov, dean of St. Sergius, the Russian Theological Institute in Paris. The British participants included Bishop Charles Gore, Rev. O. F. Clark, as well as Zoe Fairfield and Amy Buller, secretaries of the British Student Christian Movement. [161]

The second meeting took place in St. Albans in late December 1927 and early January 1928. This conference was an even greater success than the first one and led to the establishment of the Fellowship of St. Alban and St. Sergius. Evlogii, Metropolitan of Western Europe and Walter Frere, Bishop of Truro, were elected Presidents of the fellowship and Sergei Bulgakov became Vice-President. The first number of the quarterly magazine, the Journal of St. Alban and St. Sergius, appeared in June 1928. Until the beginning of the Second World War, the main feature of the work of the Fellowship were the conferences conducted on a high theological level. At first, participants in the conferences were mainly Russian Orthodox and English theological students and clergymen. Later, however, Orthodox from Romania, Serbia and Greece, Lutheran Swedes and American Episcopalians, for example, also attended. The Fellowship also became responsible of the visits of Russian students to Britain, and every summer some 50 Russians from Paris spent their holidays either in theological colleges or with English families. [162]

Interestingly, also the division of the Orthodox Church seemed to have been somewhat easier and undisputed than in many other countries, although the Church went through division also in London. By and large, the division of the church was a complicated and serious matter, which influenced the lives of Russian émigrés in all the countries of exile.

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161 Zernov, Nicolas. The Russian Religious Renaissance of the Twentieth Century. London 1963, pp. 141, 268-69; Raeff 1990, p. 137.

162 Pares collection, PAR/7/4/1. Religious News Sheet of the Russian Orthodox Theological Institute in Paris, No. 3, May 1928, pp. 3-4; Zernov Nicolas and Militza. Fellowship of St. Alban & St. Sergius: A Historical Memoir. Oxford 1979, pp. 5-8.

The first dispute occurred as early as 1921 when Russians were able to convoke a Church Council in Sremski Karlovci, in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. Metropolitan Anthony, former metropolitan of Kiev, was appointed the Presiding Bishop of the Council. Metropolitan Anthony was a strong monarchist and a resolution was made by the Council in support of the old dynasty. Metropolitan Evlogii, who had been appointed head of all the Russian parishes in Western Europe by Patriarch Tikhon of Moscow on 8 April 1921, voted in the minority against the resolution. Evlogii, unlike Anthony, wanted to keep the Church strictly non-political. After the arrest of Tikhon in 1922, Metropolitan Anthony and the Karlovci Council refused to accept Evlogii's appointment. Compromise was, however, reached and Evlogi retained his status as the bishop of Western Europe, while the Balkans and Palestine were headed by Anthony.

After the death of Patriarch Tikhon of Moscow in 1925, the tension again increased. The Metropolitan Anthony and his supporters regarded themselves as the only free spokesmen of the whole Russian Church. The Karlovci Council decided to curtail the autonomy of Metropolitan Evlogii. Evlogii, however, refused to accept the decision, and the majority of his bishops and clergy remained in his side. This meant open breach between the two parties. [163]

In 1927 Evlogii accepted the Metropolitan Sergius, appointed in Moscow after Tikhon's death, as the legitimate *Acting Locum tenens*, which meant that he also accepted obedience to the Moscow Church. Although the opinion of the majority of his supporter was that they could not declare loyalty to the communist rule, relations with Moscow were maintained until 1930. In 1930 Metropolitan Sergius issued a declaration stating that the Russian Orthodox Church had never been persecuted by the communists. Metropolitan Evlogii refused to sign this declaration, and instead placed himself under the Ecumenical Patriarch Photius at Constantinople. After the Second World War, shortly before his death, Evlogii however, returned under the Moscow Patriarch.[164]

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163 Zernov 1963, pp. 215-219; M-N. B. History of the Russian Orthodox Church in London 1707-1977. London (?) 1978, p. 36; Papers of Archbishop R.T. Davidson, Vol. 477, ff. 153-159; Headlam Papers , Ms. 2650, ff. 201-207. Lambeth Palace Library.

164 Zernov 1963, pp. 218-220, 369; Williams 1972, p. 122, footnote 23.

Consequently, also the Orthodox Church in London was divided in the late 1920s into two jurisdiction: the 'Karlovci' jurisdiction, known as the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad and the 'Evlogian' jurisdiction. Thus, Russian émigrés in London, depending on their 'conviction' chose either the 'Karlovci', or 'Evlogian' Church. Generally, the membership of the Karlovci Church practically always signified monarchist convictions[165]. Since there was only one church building [166], these two churches took turns, holding their services alternative Sundays. However, as mentioned, this division did not seem to have caused a serious drift in the personal relations of émigrés. Some émigrés even attended both services. In any case, the relations between émigrés remained largely unaltered and the émigrés continued to socialise together and met at various social functions even if they belonged to different sections of the church.[167]

The more serious schism was the decision of the 'Evlogian' church in London to go under the Moscow Patriarch after the Second World War. [168] This was strongly criticised by the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad (Karlovci church). In the opinion of the supporters of the Karlovci section there could never be communication with the Moscow Church, as it was ruled by the Soviets.[169]

6.4. Concluding Remarks

The great majority of the Russian émigrés abroad shared a general belief in the collapse of the Bolshevik regime, which would enable their return to Russia. This belief was sustained for a long time after the short-term hopes for the downfall of Bolshevism had collapsed. This was also the case with many Russian émigrés in Britain. However,

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165 Headlam Papers, Ms. 2650, ff. 201-207. Lambeth Palace Library.
166 The church, St. Phillips's, was located in the Buckingham Palace Road. It was a former Protestant Church, handed to Russians by the Anglican Church. After the Second World War the site of the church had to be vacated for the Victoria Bus station. (Reference: Interviews of Mrs. Sophie Goodman, 28 January 1997 and Father Sergei Hackell, 10 February 1999.)
167 Interviews of Mrs. Sophie Goodman, 28 January 1997 and Professor Elisabeth Kutaissova, 21 February 1997; Interview of Olga Lawrence, GLE/1/1/5; P. Shilovsky in Glenny and Stone 1990, p. 295.
168 Interview of Father Sergei Hackell, 10 February 1999.
169 Interviews of Mr. Kirill Fitzlyon, 29 November 1996 and Mrs. Sophie Goodman; Interview of Olga Lawrence, GLE/1/1/5.

judging by the accounts of many émigrés, there were quite a few first generation Russian émigrés in Britain who did not live in the past, neither raised their children believing in past. Perhaps this also partly explains why the Russian émigrés in Britain seem to have settled relatively easily to new circumstances in exile. Thus, the relations between the émigrés and the British, for example, seem to have been quite relaxed and friendly; the émigrés made friends with the British and the children of the émigrés went to the British schools and universities and were therefore quickly absorbed to the British society. All this clearly seems to have been easier and quicker than in many other countries of emigration.

The smallness of the émigré society for its part eased the process of assimilation. However, it has to be acknowledged that the attitude and the reception of the émigrés by the host society also played its role. Despite a strict policy of the British authorities in admitting refugees, the attitude of the host society towards those émigrés that were admitted was much more hospitable. Although Russian émigrés were not offered for example financial assistance by the state, some British organisations and individuals worked actively in assisting émigrés for example in the fields of employment and education. Russians themselves established and worked actively in several organisations and clubs in Britain, both individually and in co-operation with the British.
The social life of the Russian émigrés in Britain was concentrated around different functions; the Bazaar, concerts, theatre, dinners and, most significantly, the Russian Orthodox Church, which served as an important bond between the émigrés, their religion, and Russian identity. Despite the overall easy relationship between émigrés and British society, Russianness and Russian identity remained important, particularly to the first generation of émigrés. For the émigré children, however, this concept of Russianness became less distinct due to fast assimilation process.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

Inter-War Europe witnessed several refugee movements. Of these, the Russian refugee problem, in the aftermath of the Bolshevik Revolution and the Civil War, was clearly one of the most serious, affecting both individual countries of refuge, as well as the international community as a whole. Consequently, many individual European countries assisted Russian refugees to various degrees and, most importantly, actions were also taken on the part of the whole international community for their assistance.

My thesis has concentrated on the role of the British government in the Russian refugee question, and has thus sought to illuminate an area that has largely been neglected in earlier studies. This is primarily because Britain did not develop into an important centre of Russian emigration, unlike, for example, France or Germany. This, despite the fact that Britain was the Allied power most heavily involved in the Russian Civil War in assisting White Russian forces. After the war, the British government completely 'forgot' its earlier statements of the 'moral obligations of honour' to assist those Russians who had remained loyal to the Allied cause. Although Britain, as the one of the major powers in the political arena of inter-war Europe, could not stand completely aloof from the Russian refugee question the government was reluctant to accept individual responsibility for Russian refugees.

This reluctance can be best seen in the government policy towards the admission of Russian refugees to Britain. Despite the long-established reputation of Britain as a country of liberal refuge for those seeking political asylum, the British government adopted a very strict attitude against the entry of Russian refugees to Britain. At the end of 1917, the then Home Secretary Sir George Cave proposed that facilities should not be given, save in exceptional cases, for Russians to leave Russia for the United Kingdom. The main factor behind these considerations was that Russian refugees were anticipated to be very numerous and, more importantly, unlikely to be of economic value to Britain.

As a consequence, it was officially stated that as a general rule Russian refugees were not admitted to Britain and the government laid down strict conditions for the admission of individual refugees. The most important of these, although by no means always

sufficient in itself, was that the person permitted to enter had to be able to support himself and possible dependants, as no Russian refugees in Britain were to be supported from public funds. Thus, evidence of support from some source was always required before leave to land was given. With this requirement the Home Office wanted to ascertain that those admitted would not be competitors in the labour market, as it was stated that under existing conditions aliens should not be admitted for the purpose of employment. In general these rules were strictly enforced, although individual exceptions were made, for example, for those Russians who had supported British forces in Russia; for certain upper-class Russians on humanitarian grounds, especially if they had close British connections; for prominent businessmen and other well-to-do refugees, as well as for educational and academic purposes.

Economic considerations clearly had an important role in the British policy towards Russian refugees. According to the official view the economic situation in post-war Britain did not enable the country to welcome any incursion of aliens. Economic difficulties were also an important factor for the passing of immigration legislation. The 1905 Aliens Act was an official response, strengthened by public pressure, to the immigration of large numbers of Jewish immigrants from Russian Poland who were considered to be causing many social and economic problems. Similarly, the economic and political upheavals of post-war Europe were important contributors to the passing of the 1919 Aliens Restriction Act.

In an uncertain post-war situation the government was thus determined to apply strict rules against the entry of all aliens, including Russian refugees. More importantly, although economic problems and the growth of unemployment largely explain the lack of sympathy for Russian refugees, the question was also linked more generally to anti-alienism in British society and the decline of liberalism as a political philosophy, both evident before the First World War.

The outbreak of the First World War further increased anti-alien feelings in Britain and heightened the pressures for the stricter control of the entry of aliens. As a consequence, the Aliens Restriction Act of 1914 was rushed through Parliament in the course of a

single day. Strong anti-German sentiment resulted in official actions against the German population in Britain. Between 1914 and 1919, the British authorities repatriated over 20,000 Germans from Britain.[1]

'Friendly' aliens, such as Russian Polish Jews, also faced opposition. The greatest tension was linked to the military conscription issue, and the reluctance of some Jews to serve in the allied forces. In addition to the antipathy this caused in general public, it also became increasingly unacceptable to the government. In July 1917 the British and Russian governments signed a Military Service Convention, by which Russian Jews could be compelled to serve either in Russian or British forces.

The post-war parliamentary debates leading up to the passing of the Aliens Restriction Act of 1919 featured anti-German and anti-Semitic feelings and racism. Although the 1919 Act, unlike the 1914 one, emerged only after a long debate there is no doubt that these feelings had strong support also in official circles, as seen for example in the comment of one Member of the House of Commons stating 'we don't want German blood any more in this country'. Undoubtedly the possibility of gaining firm control over Jewish immigration also played a role in the passing of the 1919 Act. The deportation of Russian Polish Jews was already taking place under 1914 Act, and continued with the removal of those Jewish aliens that fell foul of the 1919 Act.[2] In the 1920s, as well as throughout the 1930s Jews continued to encounter discrimination in the fields of housing, employment and education. Alien Jews also had to face deliberate long delays in naturalisation.[3]

The continuity of anti-alienism in post-war Britain could be seen in that the 1919 Act, initially passed only for a period of one year, was in fact renewed annually until 1971. It was also complemented with Orders in Council, such as those of 1920 and 1925. The 1920 Aliens Order stipulated, for example, that any alien seeking work in Britain was required to obtain a permit from the Ministry of Labour. The 1925 Aliens Order, the

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[1] Holmes 1991, pp. 23-25; Cesarani. 'An Alien Consept', pp. 35-36. In Cesarani & Kushner (eds.) 1993.

[2] Holmes 1991, pp. 26-27; Holmes 1988, pp. 112-13.

[3] Holmes 1991, pp. 32-33, 90; Cesarani. 'An Alien Consept', p. 40. In Cesarani & Kushner (eds.) 1993.

Special Restriction (Coloured Alien Seamen) Order, was passed in order to 'close a loophole in the 1919 Act' by placing restrictions on the entry and employment of coloured seamen, a question which had led to a number of outbreaks of collective violence during early 1919. Chinese seamen suffered their share of violence, although it was their association with drug dealing that caused most resentment. The 1919 Act showed its usefulness by limiting the immigration of alien Chinese effectively accompanied with the deportation of a number of drug dealers.

Together these laws provided an effective method, by which successive British governments, irrespective of their political view, controlled the entry, employment and removal of various immigrant and refugee groups during the inter-war years. Although the Labour government, which came in power in 1929, proved somewhat more sympathetic to the plight of aliens than the Conservative ones, the essentials of the 1919 Act remained firmly in place. This can be seen, for example, in the refusal of the Labour Home Secretary, J.R. Clynes, to grant political asylum to Leon Trotskii in Britain.[4]

The example of Trotskii, i.e. the refusal of the British government to grant asylum to a person, who clearly was a political refugee, can also be applied to the 'White' Russian refugees from the Bolshevik regime. The maintenance of strict admission policies not only towards various immigrant groups, but towards refugees as well, was facilitated by the fact that the existing immigration legislation did not contain a statutory recognition of the right of asylum for political refugees. The 1905 Act had contained a special clause for the right of asylum for political refugees but it was not included in the subsequent legislation. This question had proved controversial, especially during the passing of the 1919 Act. At the time assurances had been given by the Home Secretary, Edward Shortt, that 'any decent political refugee would be admitted', even if the law did not contain special provisions for this.

What 'decent political refugee' really meant and who could be categorised as one, is less clear. For example in the case of Russian refugees 'decent' seem to have required more

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[4] Foot 1965, p. 113; Holmes 1988, pp. 107-113, 140; Cesarani. 'An Aliens Consept', pp. 40-41. In Cesarani & Kushner (eds) 1993.

than just being a genuine, non-criminal political or religious refugee. The government authorities were naturally unwilling to admit Bolshevik sympathisers but they also seem to have been reluctant to admit politically active monarchists, as it was not in the interest of the British government to support those Russian émigrés who were carrying out monarchist propaganda.

However, the great majority of Russian refugees from Bolshevik Russia were 'ordinary' refugees, who, although they might have been monarchists in their personal conviction, would not have been engaged in political activity for monarchism. Thus, the rule that any decent political refugee would be admitted was clearly not followed in the case of Russian refugees. Instead, along with other immigrant and refugee groups, they were caught up with the provisions of the Aliens Restrictions Acts of 1919 and the Aliens Order of 1920, which endowed the Home Secretary and immigration officers with wide powers over the landing, employment and deportation of *all* aliens. The absence of a statutory recognition of the right of asylum enabled the government to consider Russian refugees as part of 'normal' immigration.

Whether these considerations justified the strict policy of the British government not to admit Russian refugees to Britain is of course quite another matter. In this, the British policy can also be compared with, for example, the policy of the German government, which, despite the harsh economic situation, was much more liberal in issuing entry visas to Russian refugees. During the early 1920s the French government also issued visas liberally to Russian émigrés; in fact the government deliberately encouraged immigration of Russian émigrés for employment purposes to compensate for the population losses of the First World War. Facilitated by liberal admission policies these countries hosted between 100,000-200,000 Russian refugees compared with less than 10,000 émigrés in Britain.

Additionally, many smaller countries, such as Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia practised far more liberal policies towards Russian refugees. The Czechoslovak government, for example, invited a number of students, academic and agricultural workers to its country, and a specific programme, the so called *Russian action* was initiated by the government

for the assistance of Russian refugees. This deserves a special mention, as Czechoslovakia was the only European country with a comprehensive programme of assistance for Russian refugees. The Yugoslav government also worked actively for the settlement of Russian refugees on its territory as well as offered them financial support [5].

With the collapse of General Vrangel's army in November 1920 and the huge refugee problem it entailed, Russian refugees also became a concern for the whole international community through the actions of the League of Nations. Following an intergovernmental conference in August 1921 the League Council appointed Norwegian Fridtjof Nansen as the first High Commissioner for Russian Refugees. The main tasks of the Commissioner were: to co-ordinate the efforts for the assistance of Russian refugees; to develop plans for repatriation or, alternatively, for dispersal of refugees, particularly from Constantinople; and to define the legal status of Russian refugees.

Although from the beginning the League's and High Commissioner's work was hampered particularly by financial difficulties, the actions taken for the assistance of Russian refugees, in particular the evacuation of a large number of refugees from Constantinople as well as defining the legal status of refugees, were clearly of the utmost significance to the settlement of the Russian refugee problem. Neither can one deny the importance of the mere fact that the member states of the League were willing to take the issue of refugees under the auspices of the League. The Covenant of the League, for example, did not contain anything, which would have formally obliged it to do this. Significantly, this action marked the beginning of the international refugee regime; the active co-operation of states in the field of refugee assistance. From this starting-point, the regime gradually increased its scope for the assistance of many other refugee groups, until the outbreak of the Second World War put an end to its activity.

Humanitarian considerations undoubtedly played a part in the decision of the member states of the League to assist Russian refugees. However, there were also other reasons. Although there had been serious refugee movements before the First World War, it was

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[5] Raeff 1990, p. 29.

only after the War that the international community realised that united efforts were needed in order to solve the 'problem' of refugees. The League of Nations, for its part, had been formed in 1919 by forty-two governments 'in order to promote international co-operation and to achieve international peace and security'. As the huge flow of refugees from one country to another clearly posed a threat to the international stability and security, the League of Nations decided to take the issue of refugees under its auspices.

It was especially the two Great Powers, Britain and France that had a special interest in the Russian refugee question. By August 1921 the French government had spent approximately £3.8 million on Russian refugees. Britain had spent £1 million on Russians it had taken responsibility for as a consequence of the evacuation of General Denikin's forces and in August 1921 it still maintained some 5,000 refugees in Egypt, Cyprus and Serbia at a cost of £20,000 per month. Many other countries that had been assisting Russian refugees certainly had an interest in 'internationalising' their financial burdens.

Although it is clear that by participating internationally in the assistance of Russian refugees Britain served its own national interests, it has to be recognised that of all the members of the League, Britain did in fact provide the most financial assistance. Britain was, for instance, the only member of the League to respond to the appeal of Nansen at the end of 1921, by giving a grant for the assistance of Russian refugees in Constantinople, as well as donating substantial sum of money for the evacuation of Russian refugees from Constantinople during 1922.

The British assistance was largely guaranteed by the active work of certain individuals in the field of refugee assistance, such as Sir Samuel Hoare, the head of the Constantinople Office, Philip-Noel Baker, the member of the Secretariat of the League most directly concerned with refugee issues, General Harington, Allied Commander-in-Chief in Constantinople, Colonel Procter, chairman of the International Relief Committee and Sir Horace Rumbold, British High Commissioner in Constantinople. Thus, particularly at the individual level, British participation in the international

assistance of Russian refugees was very active and these people had a crucial role in the international assistance of Russian refugees.

However, it also has to be recognised that at no point was the British government willing to compromise its own policies, for example, as regards the admission of Russian refugees to Britain. At the time of the ratification of the agreement on identity certificates for Russian refugees the British government was careful to point out that the agreement would not in any way hinder the control of the entry of Russian refugees. The number of refugees admitted to Britain from Constantinople was probably less than a hundred. After Britain had managed to end its responsibility for refugees maintained in Egypt, Cyprus and Serbia, by coming to an agreement with the High Commissioner, the government showed less interest in the question of Russian refugees at the international level. In the latter part of the 1920s Britain for example failed to ratify the arrangements relating to Russian refugees and to appoint a delegate to the Refugee Section of the ILO or to the Nansen Office.

Nevertheless, it is evident that Britain had an important role in the working of the whole international refugee regime during the inter-war years. Although all the member states of the League were involved, or at least could be involved in the refugee work, some countries clearly had more influence than others. Also, even though the international refugee regime was centred on the refugee agencies of the League these agencies had to turn to the League Council and Assembly for funding and approval, and the Secretariat for expertise. The head of the Secretariat was the Secretary-General, a position initially held by Sir Eric Drummond of Britain and later by Joseph Avenol of France.

In the Council of the League only Britain and France served continuously as permanent members between 1920 and 1946, which greatly facilitated the involvement of the Great Powers in refugee issues. The success of the settlement of various refugee problems also clearly depended on the support of the Great Powers, as they were the major financial powers in inter-war Europe and thus played a crucial role in providing financial support

for refugee assistance. On the other hand they could also effectively veto projects if they did not agree with the proposals.[6]

Britain's attitude towards refugee assistance, in addition to the Russian case, varied over the inter-war period. Initially Britain offered strong support, for example, for Greek refugees as a consequence of the Greco-Turkish war in the early 1920s. British support for Nansen's recommendation of the international loan scheme for the refugee settlement in Greece proved to be decisive for its success. Similarly, Britain supported the loan scheme in Bulgaria for the settlement of Bulgarian refugees from Greece and other surrounding countries. However, by the late 1920s, British willingness to assist refugees had waned, culminating in the speech of Austen Chamberlain, the British Foreign Minister, at the 1928 Assembly, in which he called an end to all aid to refugees.

The British unwillingness to participate had a direct impact on the success of some projects. For example British refusal to support the loan for the settlement of Armenian refugees in Erivan helped to kill the scheme, as French and Italian governments stated they would only take part if the British did. When acting together the two Great Powers were especially influential. For example in 1935 Britain and France effectively opposed a proposal before the League Assembly which would have resulted in the creation of one agency to deal with all refugees.[7]

The rise of Hitler in Germany in the early 1930s started a new refugee wave, which differed from that of the exodus of Russian refugees in that it lasted for much longer. Interestingly, it was during this refugee crisis that British policy went through a significant change, particularly as regards the admission of refugees to Britain. Until 1938 the British government remained quite aloof from the crisis, and the government offered asylum only to a few refugees with connections and means for support.

At the international level, the newly appointed High Commissioner for Refugees coming from Germany, James G. McDonald, unsuccessfully tried to persuade Britain to

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[6] Skran 1995, pp. 76-77, 97, 279-280.

[7] Skran 1995, pp. 159-161, 169-175, 280-286.

contribute towards the cost of refugee relief. However, following the German occupation of Sudetenland in October 1938, strengthened by public pressure, the government decided to adopt a more liberal admission policy. It was at this time that the government began to distinguish between aliens and refugees; a distinction which was not observed at the time of exodus of Russian refugees, and as a consequence the number of refugees from Germany increased in Britain. By the outbreak of the Second World War Britain hosted over 50,000 refugees that had fled Fascist rule.[8] As regards asylum these refugees thus came out better than the Russian refugees from Bolshevism over a decade earlier.

Despite the reluctant attitude of the British government in admitting Russian refugees, a distinctive Russian émigré community was born in Britain in the early 1920s. However, the admission policies of the British authorities largely determined both the size and the make-up of this community. Because of strict rules governing admission, the number of Russian refugees in Britain remained much smaller than in many other countries of emigration. As those who were to be admitted had to qualify both at the financial and personal level, Russian émigrés in Britain were a more homogeneous group than in many other countries. Thus, the Russian émigré society in Britain consisted mostly of well-to-do and upper-class émigrés or academics and students, for whom exceptions were made more easily.

On the continent the émigré societies were in general more heterogeneous in their composition. France, for example, hosted a large number of intellectuals, but also a number of soldiers and civilians arriving in the aftermath of the collapse of the armies of General Vrangel'. Due to the nature of the special programme of assistance for Russian émigrés, the Russian émigré society in Czechoslovakia consisted mainly of students and intellectuals, but also of agricultural workers. In Germany, on the other hand, there were a large number of Baltic Germans, Jews and other non-Russian nationalities. Of pure Russian nationals, the two dominant groups in Germany in the early 1920s were the upper classes and intelligentsia, although with the warming of German and Soviet

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[8] Holmes 1988, pp. 146-47; Skran 1995, pp. 221-22, 232-33.

relations many monarchists found Germany inhospitable and moved on to Paris or the Balkans.

The strict provisions for entry as regards financial position meant that the overall material situation of Russian émigrés in Britain was better than in many other countries, even if many émigrés in Britain also faced financial difficulties especially at the beginning of their exile. Also, although the granting of employment permits was strictly observed by the British Ministry of Labour, in the long run, the smallness and the composition of the émigré community in Britain made it easier to find proper employment. In Britain, unlike for example in France, there were no restrictions, at least in principle, on foreigners being employed in liberal professions, such as doctors, teachers and lawyers. In France these restrictions meant that many educated émigrés had to earn their living by taxi-driving or manual work; the work prospects of those without qualifications were even less promising.[9]

The Russian émigré community in Britain, due to its nature and development, was also in other ways somewhat different from those of the larger communities, for example, in France or Germany. The notion of the existence of *Russia Abroad*, well expounded by Marc Raeff, implies that Russian émigrés in their countries of exile formed a *society*, which transcended the barriers of national frontiers. Thus, the Russian émigrés in the various countries of exile continued to consider themselves as a united Russian nation despite the fact that they were scattered in different countries.

According to Raeff, an important contributory factor to the way that the Russian émigrés constituted themselves into society was the fact the émigrés were committed to carrying on a meaningful *Russian* life and aimed at preservation of traditional Russian culture so that their children would be able play a constructive role in a future free Russia. In this way the Russian language and literature became of utmost importance, and various educational, cultural and religious institutions served as the tools of preservation and maintenance of Russian identity and culture.[10]

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[9] Johnston 1988, pp. 77-78.

[10] Raeff 1990, pp. 5, 10, 47-48.

The information gathered from the accounts of Russian emigration in the well-known centres, such as Paris, Berlin or Prague supports this point of view. In all these places, at least during the first decade of exile, Russian émigrés largely isolated themselves from the host societies and the fear of denationalisation (i.e. assimilation) was the uppermost concern of the émigré communities. Therefore the émigrés socialised mainly with their fellow émigrés. Individual contacts also generated some common economic enterprises that also strengthened the sense of isolation from the host societies.[11] This isolation is evident in the writings of Russian émigrés. Vladimir Nabokov in his autobiography speaks of his secluded years in Germany by stating that among the sprinkling of Germans and Frenchmen he had no more than two good friends.[12] To Nina Berberova, the Russian Berlin was the only Berlin she knew and the German Berlin was only 'a background for these years'.[13]

Therefore, it is all the more interesting to note that in Britain the Russian émigrés do not seem to have isolated themselves from the host society, at least to the same extent as in many other countries of emigration. On the contrary, according to émigré accounts, Russian émigrés socialised with the British from the very beginning, even if contacts with the fellow émigrés were very close and émigré society remained an important source of support, both social and material. Also, unlike for example in France, already the first generation émigrés, primarily those who had arrived as children in the early 1920s, almost exclusively married British subjects. All this suggests that assimilation into British society was both an easier and a quicker process than in many other countries.

Although the smallness of the émigré community in Britain at least partly eased assimilation, reception of émigrés by the host society also has to be taken into account. Interestingly, especially when considering the strict policy of the authorities against the entry of Russian refugees to Britain, those émigrés who were admitted do not seem to

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[11] Raeff 1990, pp. 4, 42-43; Johnston, Robert. ' Die Haupstadt der russischen Diaspora'. In Schlögel, Karl (ed.). Der Grosse Exodus. Die Russische Emigration und ihre Zentren 1917 bis 1941. Munich 1994, pp. 273-75; Chinyaeva 1994, pp. 35, 182-83, 294.

[12] Nabokov 1969, p. 213.

[13] Berberova 1969, p. 165.

have faced hostilities. According to émigré accounts Russian émigrés were treated well and they managed to make good friends among the British.

In many other countries of emigration the émigré accounts were less positive. In Czechoslovakia, despite the relatively small number of Russian émigrés and the governmental programme of assistance for Russians, the left-wing circles that were influential among workers and intellectuals were in fact hostile towards Russian émigrés. Although Russian émigrés themselves wanted to maintain their national identity and often deliberately isolated themselves from the host society, this hostility hardly increased their willingness to assimilate. The host societies in the larger centres of Russian emigration, such as Paris or Berlin, did not always welcome Russian émigrés either, even if this fact has been often overshadowed by the notion of the unwillingness of the émigrés to assimilate.

An important factor working towards the assimilation of Russian émigrés into British society was that in Britain émigré children were educated in British schools, universities and other educational establishments. This compared with the situation on the continent where many Russian émigré children attended Russian primary and secondary schools, and even universities. Russian schools aimed at preserving the children's knowledge of Russia and traditional Russian culture were considered of utmost importance in the fight against denationalisation of the Russian youth in exile, together with the educational work of families.[14]

Although the effort to teach émigré youth in Russian schools was quite short-lived and the number of Russian schools had dwindled drastically by the late 1930s [15], in the 1920s a variety of Russian schools could be found in the main centres of emigration. For example in France, Germany and Czechoslovakia there were both Russian primary and secondary schools, as well as various institutions of higher education, such as the Russian University in Prague, the People's Universities both in Paris and Prague and the

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[14] Dolgorukov, Petr. 'Chuvstvo rodiny u detei', pp. 168, 181. In Zenkovskii, V.V (ed.). Deti Emigratsii. Sbornik statei. Prague 1925; Kovalevskii 1971, pp. 35-37; Raeff 1990, pp. 4, 48.

[15] Johnston 1988, p. 88; Raeff 1990, p. 57.

Russian Scientific Institute in Berlin.[16] These educational establishments strengthened the feeling of Russianness among émigré children and slowed down the process of assimilation. In Britain, the opposite was the case and since no Russian schools existed, all the émigré children attended British schools, which, again, eased their assimilation into British society.

In addition to schools there were other important tools for the preservation of Russian identity, such as the press and literature, the Orthodox Church and various émigré organisations, both cultural and political. The small size of the émigré community in Britain meant that the level of these activities was much lower than in the main centres of emigration, although in the early 1920s there were several Russian organisations, as well as newspapers and journals in Britain. Compared to, for example, Paris, Berlin or Prague, they were, however, quite short-lived, concentrating on the first few years of the 1920s. The literary and artistic 'elite' of Russian emigration was also concentrated on the continent; the few well-known émigrés in Britain, such as Pavel Miliukov or Vladimir Nabokov, only stayed for a short period.

Perhaps an even more significant difference was in the level of émigré politics. The Russian émigré society in Britain was less politically active, and many political parties that were strongly represented in the continent played no active role among Russian émigrés in Britain. The absence of active émigré politics undoubtedly also smoothened relations between the émigrés and their host society.

Whilst there was no great level of political activity, socially and culturally the Russian émigrés in Britain were much more active. There were a variety of concerts, bazaars, balls and dinners and the majority of émigrés regularly attended the Orthodox Church. As in other countries, the role of the church as a significant bond between émigrés and their Russian identity was considered very important. However, attendance at the Orthodox Church do not seem to have strengthened the feelings of isolation, as often happened in the larger centres of emigration. That the British authorities seem to have

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[16] Schlögel. 'Berlin: Stiefmutter unter den russichen Städten', pp. 243-44; Sladék, Zdenek. ' Prag: das "russische Oxford" ', pp. 224-25; Johnston. ' Paris: Die...', p.271. All in Schlögel (ed.) 1994; Raeff 1990, pp. 60- 65.

adopted a positive attitude towards the Church and, during the 1920s, close connections were established between the Anglican and Russian Churches undoubtedly helped in this.

The Russian Student Christian Movement was particularly attracted to the Anglican Church life, even if the headquarters of the movement was in Paris. Close contacts led to the establishment of the Fellowship of St. Alban and St. Sergius and to a series of conferences between Russian and English student circles. The fellowship also sponsored study visits of Russian students to Britain which helped Russian students to overcome their sense of isolation.

Thus, Russian emigration in Britain has a somewhat different story to that of emigration to many other countries in Europe. Firstly, unlike, for example the French, German or Czechoslovak governments, the British government adopted a very strict policy against the admission of Russian émigrés. Consequently, the number of émigrés in Britain remained quite small, and due to selection criteria the composition of the émigré community in Britain was more homogeneous than in many other countries, consisting largely of educated, upper-class and well-to-do elements.

Secondly, despite the negative attitude towards the admission of refugees, those Russians that were admitted seem to have been received well in Britain. There was thus a clear difference between the official policy and the social attitude. Whether the Russian case can be generalised is, however, quite another matter. It is evident, for example, that the anti-alien attitude expressed at the time of the passing of various immigration laws was not limited to official circles but had also public support. Moreover, although immigration controls probably partly eased the social resentment towards aliens through the effective control of the size and 'quality' of immigration, the inter-war years witnessed continuing hostility towards immigrants, casting a shadow over the often-emphasised tolerant image of British society.

Not all the immigrant groups were, however, targets of hostility. Both the official and social responses towards immigrants were often marked with complexity and ambiguity.

Most intensive hostility was nevertheless often directed towards those immigrant groups that were seen as economic, social or cultural 'threats' to the host society. The hostility expressed, for example, towards Russian Polish Jews, coloured seamen or Chinese during inter-war years can be largely understood through a mixture of these factors.[17]

As we have seen, the reception of Russian émigrés was more relaxed. One might be tempted to explain all by the small size of the group but on the other hand there is evidence that even very small groups were sometimes unable to escape hostility, as happened, for example, to German gypsies in Britain before the First World War.[18]

Thus, other factors were probably more significant in explaining the unproblematic relations between Russian émigrés and British society. Among these, the fact that Russian émigrés in Britain went through a strict process of selection in admission was undoubtedly important. That the majority of those who were admitted were either well-to-do, upper class or educated elements, made their reception easier, especially as many of them also had close British connections, which had facilitated their entry. The émigrés themselves seem to have showed great appreciation of the fact that they were admitted to Britain, managed to make good friends among the British, thought highly of British education and thus wanted their children to be educated at British schools. All this worked towards their easier assimilation into British society.

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[17] Holmes 1988, pp. 107-113, 300-301, 311-12; Holmes 1991, pp. 73-79, 91-92.

[18] Holmes 1991, pp. 83-84.

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